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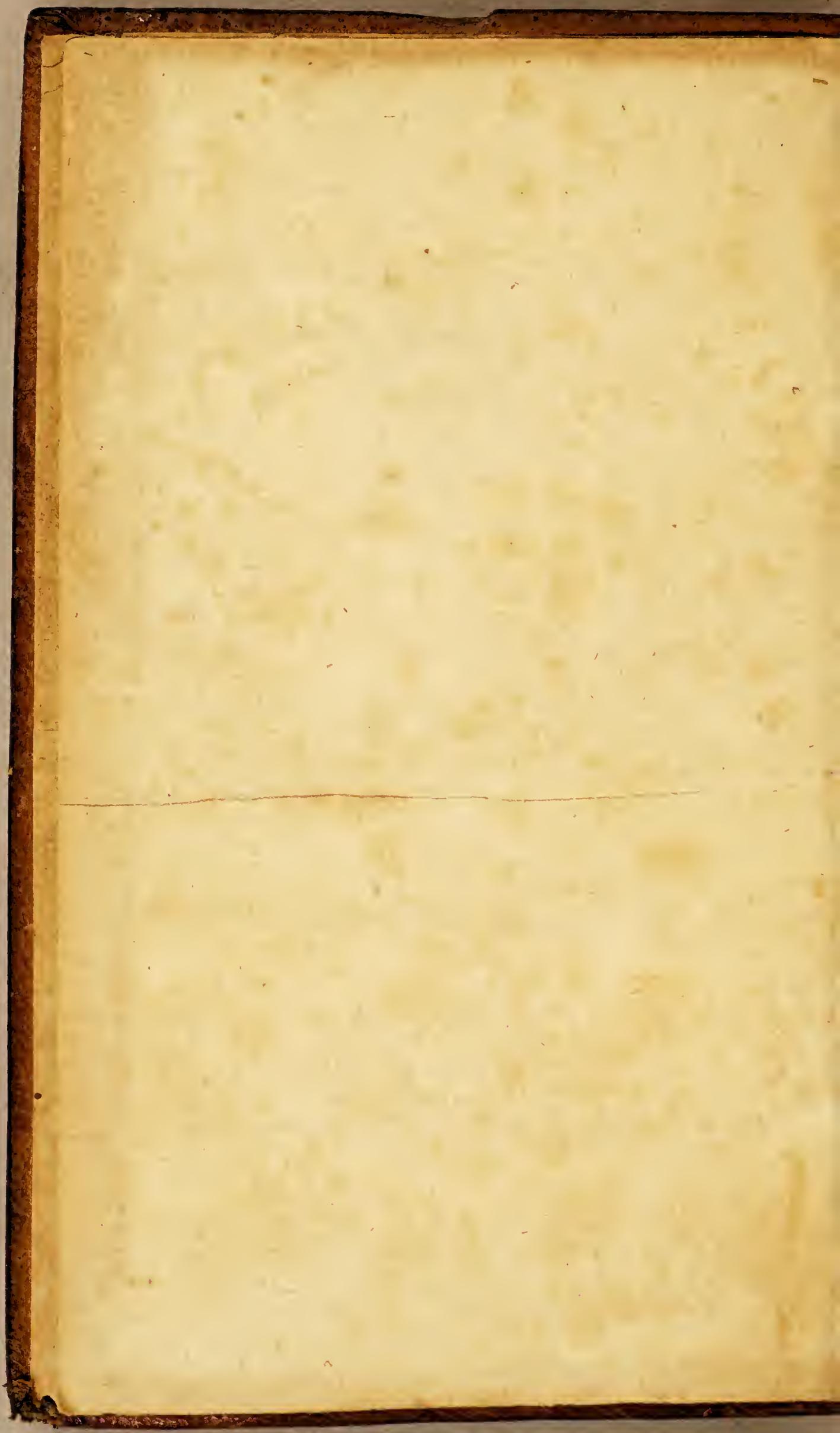


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DIVINE BREATHINGS :

O R,

SPIRITUAL MEDITATIONS

Suited to the OCCASION of

BREAKING BREAD,

O R

Communicating in the L O R D ' S S U P P E R.

By JOHN BEART,

Pastor of a Church of Christ in Bury, Suffolk.

L O N D O N :

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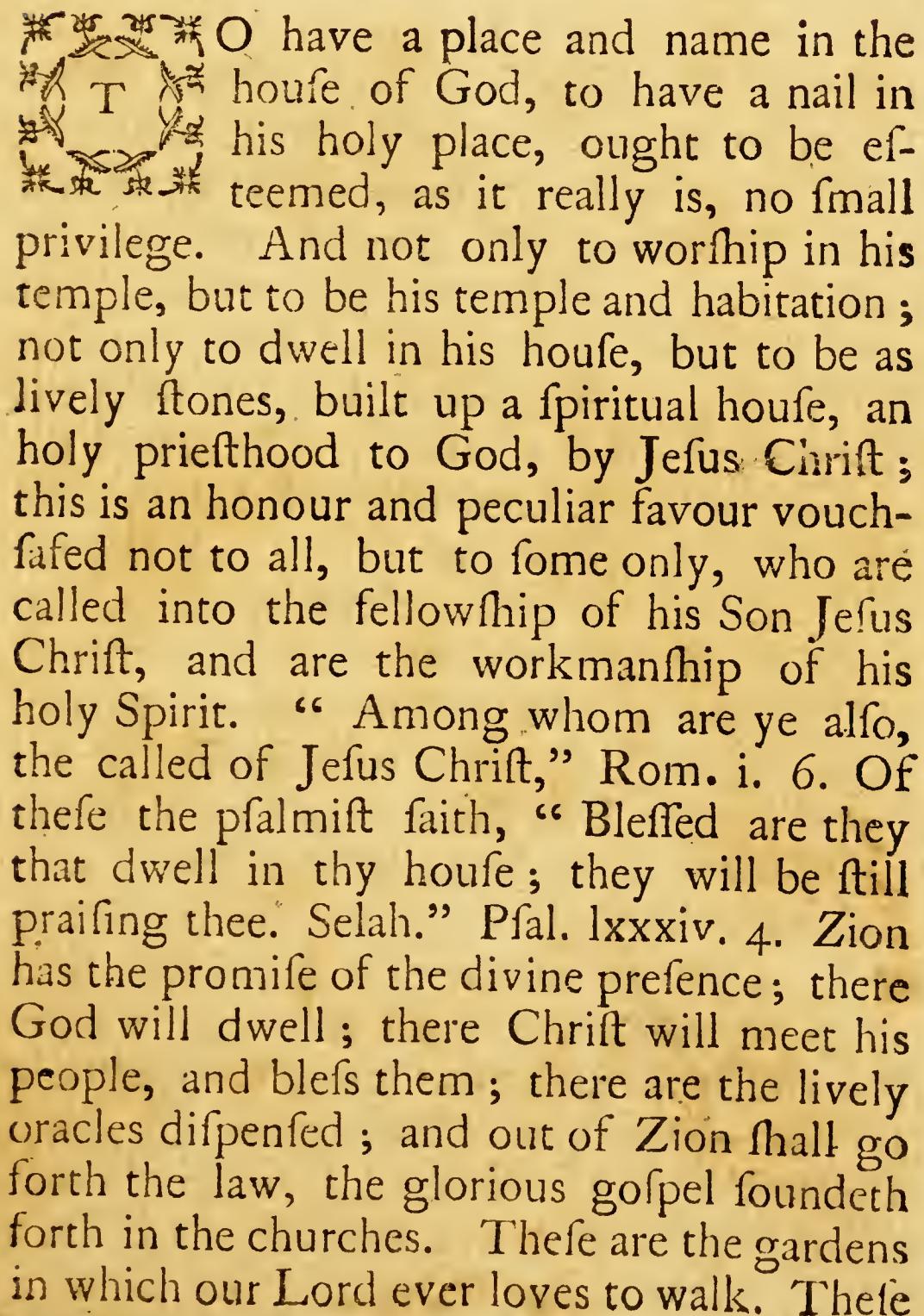
M.DCC.LXI.



T O

That little Flock, the Church of Christ
at Bury, over which (I humbly trust)
the Holy Ghost hath made me Overseer;
though I am nothing.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord, and longed for,

O have a place and name in the house of God, to have a nail in his holy place, ought to be esteemed, as it really is, no small privilege. And not only to worship in his temple, but to be his temple and habitation; not only to dwell in his house, but to be as lively stones, built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood to God, by Jesus Christ; this is an honour and peculiar favour vouchsafed not to all, but to some only, who are called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ, and are the workmanship of his holy Spirit. "Among whom are ye also, the called of Jesus Christ," Rom. i. 6. Of these the psalmist saith, "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee. Selah." Psal. lxxxiv. 4. Zion has the promise of the divine presence; there God will dwell; there Christ will meet his people, and bless them; there are the lively oracles dispensed; and out of Zion shall go forth the law, the glorious gospel soundeth forth in the churches. These are the gardens in which our Lord ever loves to walk. These

iv DEDICATION.

are taken out of the world, and are his inclosures, fenced in by his love and care, by his laws, and sacred immunities bestowed on them. And as he hath given his word to be dispensed in Zion, for gathering in a people to his name, and building up those who are gathered: so also his sacraments, to be the signs and seals of his covenant with us; that as we are first devoted to the service of our great Lord, and engaged for him, whose name, as Father, Son, and Spirit, is named upon us in baptism: so we might again and again be owning our covenant-relation, be renewing our covenant-engagements, and be nourished from time to time, by that holy ordinance the Lord's Supper, wherein Christ the food of our souls, is set before us.

Howbeit, my brethren, rest not in these your privileges, however great; nor in your duties of church-relation and worship, but in the blood and righteousness of the great Redeemer: and be pressing on unto perfection, reaching after the communion of his upper house. Every church of Christ rightly constituted, is the image of the church invisible, the mystical body of Christ: and as it is so by institution and privilege; so it ought to be so in purity and holiness, "blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke—holding forth the word of life," Phil. ii. 15, 16. When I consider church-fellowship, and the materials of Christ's house, in the abstract idea of them, an holy people,

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people, separated from the world, not regarding things below, but aspiring after heavenly things, walking in the ways of the Lord blameless : O what high and lofty thoughts doth this raise of such a fellowship, of such a people, and such privileges ! But when I consider them in the concrete, and what we do really attain unto, and what our walk really is, - as a mixture of wise and foolish virgins, as but a visible church, a professing people, and every believer as two men, an old man and a new : how is the high idea abased ! What allowances must we make ! What abatements from those wonderful things, that are spoken of saints and churches ! How far short do we fall ! And (to our shame) what do we more than others ? Lord ! Help and heal thy people. The present state of churches and christians is not what we aspire after : we are yet *in via*, in the way ; and but in a state of preparation (tho' not merely of probation) for the purity and glory of the New Jerusalem, making our way thro' this world to the heavenly Canaan.

All things, my beloved, are yours, whether Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, &c. The ministers of Christ are in the inventory of your good things. And all things are for your sakes, whether we are afflicted, or tempted, or live or die, 2 Cor. iv. 15. I speak of a common privilege to all the churches and believers in Christ. But in a special manner, I reckon my strength, my

vi DEDICATION.

time and labours, to be yours, as a particular church. And as these are for your sakes, so may they be for your great benefit, "that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God, *viz.* in that day, when God shall raise up us his ministers by Jesus, and present us with you."

Among my other labours, these following meditations are your due in the first place; as having been delivered among you, at several times, especially from p. 21. at the table of our Lord; and as those which, I hope, may be of future advantage, through the blessing of the Spirit. And forasmuch as the subject is of general concernment to all churches, and their several members, I hope it may find acceptance among those, who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious," who have known his dying love, and do often solemnize the memory of his death in his supper. I know, that others have laboured well, and with good success, in this province: and who am I, to bring my mite to the Lord's treasury, after the abundance that has been cast in? but some shorter meditations, directly to the occasion of communicating, and adapted to stir up suitable affections therein, seemed to me something necessary still: in which, how I have succeeded, is left to the judgment of others. Love to Christ, I trust, through grace, hath dictated some part of these composures: and if they may assist

DEDICATION. vii

the love of others to him, who is altogether lovely, I have my end.

And you, my beloved hearers, though not walking in church-communion, nor partaking with us at the Lord's table, I long after you greatly, to see you hewn and living stones fitted for the building. Some of you, I doubt not, have tasted that love of Christ which passeth knowledge ; and hope these papers may, one day, be of use to you, as eating the same spiritual bread, and drinking the same cup, with us. And for others, the Lord help you to consider, you must, one day know the gospel hath been preached to you ; and O that you also may know the joyful sound, and bless God for the treasure committed to an earthen vessel, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, with respect, if it may be, to any of you that attend on my ministry !

The contents will shew the method of this work, and the heads I go upon. My thoughts enlarged beyond my first design, and I soon found it was possible to bring the whole compass of gospel-doctrine into this subject : but I approve not such a way of handling any text or subject of discourse. The reader will do well to read through the following sheets : but my design hath been, and my advice is, that, to furnish meditation for communicating at the Lord's table, he read one chapter, or one meditation only,

at once, and fix and inlarge upon it in his own thoughts and contemplations. For alas ! we have narrow vessels, and cannot take in all things at once, and are apt to tire in following any one point somewhat far.

Dwell much, my brethren, upon the meditation of the person and love of the Lord Jesus Christ, Heb. iii. 1. " Consider the Apostle and high-priest of our profession, &c." consider him in the glory and perfection of his priesthood ; and how vast an idea doth this give us of him ! that the God of heaven came down on mount Sinai, and there institutes a frame of worship great and solemn, commands a tabernacle to be reared up, an altar to be built, and daily sacrifices offered, till the times of reformation. Now what means all this solemnity, all this shew, all these ordinances of divine worship ? With what solemnity is the tabernacle set up and anointed (Exod. xl.) and Aaron and his sons initiated and consecrated (Lev. viii.) and the altar itself dedicated ? (Numb. vii.) And afterwards, what more magnificent than the building of the temple by Solomon, or more solemn than the dedication of it, 1 Kings, chap. vi. and viii. ? " When these things were thus ordained," the priests always attended, accomplishing the service of God ; and this worship endured about fifteen hundred years. Now it was not for the sake of the priests that ministred, nor of the worship performed by them, but to hold forth and lead

DEDICATION. ix

lead unto the one high-priest, and one sacrifice of Jesus Christ ; who, " by one offering, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. x. 14. All that glory is swallowed up of a superior glory ; and the priesthood given up to him who came in meanness and humiliation, who was put to death by means of those priests, who, by his favour, ministred at the altar.

And not only so, but the glory of this new creation outshines the glory of the first. And so great is this marvellous work of our redemption, that God himself says, " Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old." And why so ? It follows, " Behold, I will do a new thing, &c." Isa. xliii. 18, 19. It is imperative in v. 18. and means, that in comparison of his new works, wrought by Christ, the former should be forgotten. When we therefore remember the Lord's death, we must look upon it as the chief of the ways and works of God.

The Lord's-day is for the commemoration of the Lord's death, that when we testify and confess ourselves the servants of the most high God, Creator of heaven and earth, by keeping holy to him a seventh part of time ; we testify and profess ourselves the servants of the great Redeemer, by keeping holy to him his day, the first day of the week. For he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

x DEDICATION.

To conclude: let me beseech you, brethren, to consider and improve your relation and engagement to each other in Christ Jesus, and the solemn engagements that the Lord's Supper lays you under thereunto. Love, reprove, exhort, and comfort one another, as those that "eat the same spiritual bread, and drink the same spiritual drink;" *viz.* the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ.

Our God hath given us rest and liberty, under a wise, just, and good king, who judges THE TOLERATION OF PROTESTANT DISSENTERS TO BE AGREEABLE TO CHRISTINA CHARITY, AND NECESSARY TO THE RICHES AND TRADE OF THE KINGDOM. Blessed be God, who hath heard the prayers of his people, and hath "put such a thing as this in the king's heart!" Let us study what returns we may make unto God, and to the glorious instrument of our new deliverance.

Pray for me, that I may not want the divine presence and blessing in my Lord's work; that he who hath sown, and they who reap, may, one day, rejoice together; which, that it may be so, is the earnest prayer of

Your unworthy Pastor, and

brother in the Lord,

J. B.

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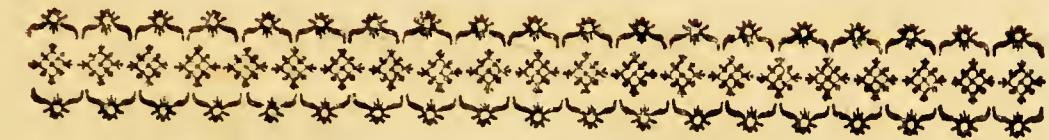
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M E D I-



MEDITATIONS

Suited to the OCCASION of
BREAKING BREAD.



P A R T I.

Containing brief Discourses on certain Portions of Scripture.



C H A P. I.

Of Examination for the Lord's Supper.

THE holy apostle Paul, writing to a church of Christ, when he came particularly to treat of this ordinance, lays down this rule, 1 Cor. xi. 28. "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." Now there are two things principally of which we are to examine ourselves.

I. Of our state.

II. Of our present frame.

I. Of our state God-ward. Whether we are in a state of grace and of spiritual life? Whether

B

we

we are regenerate and new-born, and so passed from death to life? How weighty and solemn is this inquiry! Now here let me advertise in the beginning of this work, that they who are not in a state of grace, can receive no spiritual good or advantage by this ordinance, nor shall it profit them at all. The reason is, because it is intended for the nourishment of spiritual life, and the increase of grace, and is therefore administred as the spiritual food of our souls. But how can spiritual life be nourished where it is not begun, or grace increased where it is not wrought? They were his disciples to whom Christ administred, and they were “sanctified in Christ Jesus,” and “called to be saints,” to whom the Apostle is writing here, chap. i. ii. Hence that preaching or writing is not to be approved, that puts and presses men upon a receiving of the Lord’s Supper, who are professors only at large, and have not known a new-birth. Some there are who answer that objection, I am not fit, I am not prepared, to this purpose. If it is a sin to come, it is a greater sin to neglect so known a duty. I say, it is not an immediate duty. It is not their duty, in their present state, if they are not fit; but rather their duty to forbear, and wait to be made meet for the kingdom of grace here, and of glory hereafter. They cannot answer the ends of this holy solemnity, and therefore ought not to come. Nor may this childrens bread be given to dogs. Besides, it is against this very text, which I am speaking to: for to what purpose is self-examination, if they ought to come whether they are fitted for this ordinance or no?

There

There are two things required in order to a participation of the Lord's Supper.

1. That a man be in Christ. "Sanctified in Christ Jesus." Partaker of the things signified. That he knows "the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, and be conformed to his death." And so be enabled to "discern the Lord's body."

2. That he be in the church. A member in full communion with some particular church of Christ. The former gives a remote right, and this an immediate right to this ordinance. The Apostle is writing here, "to the church of God which is at Corinth," chap. i. ii. that particular church, called and gathered out of the world. Corinth was a city of Greece, famous for trade and riches; infamous for plays celebrated to Neptune, and on that account called by Pindar, blessed Corinth, the threshold of Neptune's Isthmus, famous for young men. It was addicted to idolatry, unbounded lust, and drunkenness. See Du Veil on Acts xviii. 1. The Apostle tells them, and appeals to themselves in it, chap. xii. 2. "Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led." Among these poor heathens, the gospel triumphed in the conversion of many, and gathering a gospel-church to the name of the Lord Jesus, Acts xviii. 8.—11. But all the city were not converted. Therefore he faith, the church at Corinth, *viz.* that were gathered out from the rest, being called and sanctified, and embody'd in a christian communion. And they were these christians, assembling in the church, and as a church, that did partake of the

Lord's Supper, chap. xi. 18, 20, 22. Now this is a common mistake among christians, they think that church communion is for this ordinance; when this and other ordinances are for church communion. They come and say, they would partake of the Lord's Supper. That may be a good and gracious desire. But they should desire communion with the church in all ordinances, and look upon church relation, and church communion, as a precious ordinance, even though there were not the Lord's Supper, for want of a pastor, or the like, to be administered. Nor have they a right to the Lord's Supper till they are first members, Acts ii. 41, 42. Then, O believer, when thou hast given the evidences of a new-birth, and art laid as a living stone in the spiritual building, who can forbid thee to come and partake in the privileges of Christ's house.

I would not be misunderstood, and therefore I add, 1. That it is a very incumbent duty upon all gracious souls, upon all that have "tasted the Lord is gracious," to join themselves in fellowship with some church of Christ. And it is the duty also of churches to receive them that are weak in the Faith, as well as them that are strong, and not to "despise the day of small things." 2. That it is a very incumbent and immediate duty upon every church-member, ordinarily, to commemorate the sufferings of Christ, in this holy ordinance of his Supper; and to look upon themselves under that great command, "This do in remembrance of me." A neglect in either of these is very sinful. The Lord lay it upon the consciences of all that truly love him.

How-

Howbeit, we lay not the stress of salvation upon any outward ordinance whatsoever. Souls may be saved, and all true believers shall be so, whether they ever have communion with a visible church, or no, whether they ever receive the Lord's Supper, or no. And on the other hand, church-members and communicants that are not true believers, shall perish at last. "Have we not eat and drank," say they, "in thy presence?" The ground of this is, that it is by a vital union with, and relation to the Lord Jesus Christ, that we partake of his saving benefits; and every soul ought to have that vital union and relation, in judgment of charity, before he is added to a church of Christ, Acts ii. 47. "The Lord added" *σωζομενος*, save done "to the church daily." So it is rendered, Rev. xxi. 24. "The nations of the saved." Compare I Cor. i. 18. "To us who are saved it is the power of God, v. 21. it pleased God to save them that believe;" which is explained v. 24. "But unto them which are called." Were not these Corinthians called ones, before they were a church of Christ? and of these saved, called ones, that church was formed. Being called they were already in a state of salvation, from which they should not fall, but persevere unto eternal life.

II. We are to examine ourselves of our present frame. Whether there is a suitable frame and disposition of heart for the Lord's Supper? This point of self-examination is not to be carried so, as if believers were ever, and every time, to be inquiring about their state and their relation to Christ; at least, if that should suppose that

they are to doubt it, and to call it into question. True believers are not to examine themselves concerning their state, as if it were a matter of uncertainty to them, although in fact it is often so to their apprehension. This were to bring up the popish doctrine of doubts and uncertainty of our salvation. Do we always examine, and never arrive at a certainty? Doth it not shame thee, O believer, after a long profession, still to be at uncertainty, what thy present state is, and what thy eternal state is like to be? Canst thou not yet prove thine own work, and make out that Christ is in thee, that thou mightest have rejoicing in thine own soul? There are some believers who walk in the daily sense of God's love. They may look back upon past experiences, and bless God for calling grace: they may look over their present experiences, and see their firm trust and dependance on the blood and righteousness of a dear Saviour. But to doubt and question their interest is not their duty, but the work of unbelief.

It remains then that they examine concerning the present frame and disposition of their souls. They should look back to the last time of communicating, and see the workings of corruption since that time; the inroads which the temptations of satan, of sin, and of the world, have made upon them: and come and be humbled, and mourn over their dying Lord. They may see what unbelieving and unsuitable frames are found with them, and endeavour to lay them aside, and get them crucified by faith in him who died for them. They may consider their ends in coming, and see what grace is in exercise, or whether

whether it is so or no: and press after such a frame as is suited to the great ends of the Lord's Supper; and by earnest prayer try to engage the presence of Christ with them, that when the king sits at his table, their spikenard may send forth the smell thereof.



C H A P. II.

Of preparation for the Lord's Supper.

IN Prov. xvi. 1. we read, “The preparations [or disposings] of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord.”

I cannot approve their version who read these words, “The preparations of the heart are of man (or in the power of man) but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.” As if to speak were not as much a natural act, and in the power of man, as to think: or as if to think, or order the meditations of the heart, were not as much of God as the answer of the tongue, or ordering the words. I doubt not our translation reads it according to the mind of the Holy Ghost, and I think, is as much, nay more favour'd by the original than the other; only I would say [for man] or [of man] for so the Hebrew is, but this alters not the sense. The word rendered [preparations] signifies [disposings] and orderings. It is used in a military sense concerning ordering of armies, and of the ordering and ranging of the loaves of proposition or shew-bread in the sanctuary,

I Sam. iv. 16. Lev. iv. 26, 27. It meaneth then the putting in order, and right disposing and guiding of the inward thoughts, motions, and frames of the heart. All this is of the Lord. The Apostle assures us, not only that we cannot speak, but that we cannot so much as think any thing of ourselves. And the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. When that so answers in gracious speeches these inward gracious disposings, that the "meditation of the heart, and words of the mouth, are acceptable to the Lord," Psal. xix.

14.

Now preparation also is twofold.

1. Habitual. 2. Actual. The former respects the state, the latter the frame and disposition of the soul God-ward. The former includes both justification and regeneration; that a poor soul be found in Christ, cloathed with his righteousness, justified by his blood, and so accepted of God in that beloved, for that is the whole ground of our acceptance: and again, that he be renewed and sanctified by the spirit of God, cleansed from the defilement and pollution of sin, so that he doth not love it, nor live in it, doth not serve nor obey it in the lusts of it. And that there be contrary principles of grace and holiness fixed and set up in the heart; the spirit himself dwelling in him, with his blessed train, those fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Actual preparation respects especially the exercise of grace. That those graces of the holy spirit be not altogether obstructed and hindered in their exercise, by the prevalence of any lust, by sinful

sinful frames, or by the cares and concerns of life, but that there be the going forth of the soul in faith, repentance, joy, love, hope, and such-like. For then it is that our “spices flow forth, and our beloved comes and takes of his pleasant fruits.”

Now both these preparations are of the Lord. As in the text, and 2 Chron. xxix. 36. at that great celebration of the passover by good Hezekiah. We read “Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the People, that God had prepared the people, for the thing was done suddenly.” The meaning is, that God had inclined and disposed them for the work, and assisted them in the performance. That there was love and joy, and other suitable affections, for so great a work.

But under the gospel we do not need those preparations, by washings, and purifyings, and such-like legal services, which were in use under the law. The gospel makes shorter work, and requires something more spiritual, *viz.* the sacrificing of our lusts, and the offering up of our souls to God in flames of love.

Query, Do we not then need days of preparation? I answer; we may easily conceive too legally of such days. When we think our preparation depends on them, as if we were then prepared when we have kept such a day, and gone through the services thereof, or as if we were not prepared without it. These are legal and carnal thoughts, and carry us off from true gospel-preparation. I say then,

I. Men may be far from preparation, who have kept a day or days, in whatever exercises of religion, whether publick or private. Nay

perhaps they are not a whit the nearer, as to their state or frame. How easy were it to be prepared, if this would do ! I would not insinuate, that all who keep a day do imagine that sufficient ; but to instruct the ignorant, and to warn any from taking up here.

2. A true believer may be truly prepared without any of these preparatory exercises. The primitive christians, in all likelihood, brake bread every sabbath-day, and perhaps oftener. But though no doubt they sometimes met on other days, yet it doth not appear that they did so in any stated way : for if that had been intended, there would have needed an institution of every fifth, or sixth, or seventh day, as a preparation-day. But all ~~that~~ we find is, that they were converted, and added to the church, and then “ continued in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and breaking of bread and prayers.”

Of preparation-days we find nothing, much less a whole week’s preparatory devotions, and a long roll of directions, how they were to walk before, how they were to walk after ; which tacitly suggests, that intermediate time (if there is any) may be passed at a larger and looser rate. But who sees not, that all time is either what goes before or follows after ; and then such directions amount to no more, than how we ought to walk with God all our days, which should be “ without fear, in holiness, and righteousness before him all the days of our lives,” Luke i. 74.

A true believer is always habitually prepared ; that is, he is ready, he is worthy in a gospel-sense. He has that faith and love, that fear and hatred

hatred of sin, that joy and peace, or at least that hope in Christ, that in the main dispose him for this great work. Do you not upbraid yourselves with a very unbecoming walk, who think you cannot be prepared without some days notice? Have you not received the spirit of adoption, the spirit of sons? Have you not learned to come to God as a father, and to draw near with boldness to the throne of grace? Is not the veil of the temple rent, and the way into the holiest made manifest? What are you doing in the week? Are you not serving God in your families, and in your lawful occasions? These are good works, if done in faith. But more than that, do you not walk with God every day, and live upon Jesus Christ, and call upon his name, and converse with the father through him? It is high time you should, if it be otherwise. Nay this you do, in some measure, if you are what you profess to be.

I tell you, believers! you ought to have your spiritual state settled, to see yourselves in Christ, and in the number of his called, and not to go on thus, having all to make out, to the end of your days: and then so to walk with God, as not at all to fear to draw nigh to him in the greatest gospel-solemnities; but at all times to come with liberty, with boldness, "with full assurance of faith," Heb. x. 22.

Object. But I ought not to come reeking out of the world to such a solemnity.

Ans. To come reeking from the world is to come with covetous, carnal, worldly frames. Such I fear are not fit indeed. But to come from serving God in thy lawful occasions, and walk-

ing with him in obeying his commands, “ Six days shalt thou labour ;” to obey his command, “ This do in remembrance of me ;” is nothing blame-worthy.

Yet in all this, I intend nothing against church-assemblies, as at other times, and on other occasions, so on this occasion ; I mean on some week-day before breaking of bread, and that with a special regard to the work of the approaching sabbath ; seeing the ordinary practice of breaking bread is not every Lord’s-day, nor can well be attained in the present state of things. Such days, kept in prayer and preaching suitable to the occasion, have been found of use, and ought to be attended, by all that conveniently can. This we constantly practise, and perhaps all the churches. But I speak for the sake of those, who at such times are absent ; and those who may not know the time of breaking bread, till on the Lord’s-day, they find it is a part of the present work ; and those who in journeying are providentially with other churches ; and that none might lay the stress of their preparation in some foregoing religious exercises. Such christians as I have mentioned may and ought to communicate, and to reckon themselves prepared for the work, by virtue of their relation to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to his people. But when the time is known and fixed by church-agreement, believers may and ought to direct their meditations, self-examinations and prayers, that way, both before (tho’ in their lawful occasions,) and on the day, when it is administered. This is all I know of preparation.

For,

For, to tell men that are not habitually prepared (I mean that are not converted) they must prepare themselves, is to tell them, they must convert themselves. And as for those, who, when poor souls do rightly enough object, they are not fit to come to the Lord's table, do tell them in a very slightly manner, they must go and make themselves fit, or prepare themselves ; I say, they shew that they themselves know nothing of the matter, nor have part nor lot therein, tho' they may be teachers of others. Farther, to tell believers, they must prepare themselves, doth not stand altogether so evangelically, as to tell them, they must wait on God for heart-preparation, that he would prepare their hearts to himself, and enable them to discern the Lord's body.

I only add, as to that preparation which consists in right and gracious frames : be not discouraged, believer, if thou dost not find thy heart so disposed as thou desirest, it is not a sufficient bar to the ordinance. The frame and temper of thy heart may be changed in a moment ; and grace drawn into exercise, either immediately before, or in the very ordinance. It depends on a gale from heaven, Cant. iv. 16. Thou hast an enlarged frame the evening before, and thou hast lost it on the Lord's-day morning ; or thy heart is enlarged under the word the same day, and thou dost not find it so at the Lord's table. Again ; thy heart was dead and backward in all the foregoing work : but a smile from thy dear Lord, a touch, a look of love from him, melts and overcomes thee at last, and, 'ere thou art aware,

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aware, thy “ soul makes thee as the chariots” of a willing people. And if “ it is not so, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth ?”



C H A P. III.

Of eating and drinking unworthily.

I COR. xi. 27.

“ Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, v. 29.—He eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, &c.”

AS these words have been a sacred fence and guard about the Lord’s table, to keep profane sinners, and persons unworthy, who are called christians, at a distance from this solemnity : so they have often been a terror to sincere persons, who, thro’ a misunderstanding of them, have been too long deterred from what was plainly their duty ; or, after the performance, have been terrified with fears of having incurred what is here threatened. It is needful therefore a little to open this awful portion of scripture.

What therefore is it to eat this bread, and drink this cup, unworthily ?

Answ. There is an unworthiness of the person, and of the partaking or receiving.

I.

I. Of the person. As when such an one is an unbeliever or unregenerate. And even here there are degrees of guilt. Some are under a common work, which they mistake for a saving, and so deceive themselves, and perhaps don't aim at deceiving others. These may aim at receiving some good, and have a right to the ordinance in *foro ecclesiæ*, in the judgment of the church. Others may intend to deceive, and design to cover sinful ways by a profession, or seek to commend themselves to men. Others more wicked may secretly despise the ordinance, look upon it as a common thing, and make a mock of what they do. That there are such degrees of sinning, as to religious performances, among the unregenerate, see Prov. xxi. 27. “The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination,” how much more “when he bringeth it in wickedness, or with a wicked mind?” It is supposed, that besides the natural wickedness of the heart, there may be a wicked mind, or farther wickedness, in bringing of his sacrifice. Some are guilty only of the former, some of both these. Some may think to make their peace with God by coming, or think as the Israelites by the ark, it shall save us. I Sam. iv. 3. It shall kill our lusts, chace away satan, give us peace of conscience. But they will sooner or later see their mistake, as the Israelites did, when they put their trust in the ark, though a precious ordinance of God, and the symbol of his presence. Thus some may sin more presumptuously, and others through ignorance.

II. There's an unworthiness of the participation. And this is twofold.

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1. In the inward frame. And may not a believer, who is truly so, be somewhat guilty here? Guilty of undue frames, and so eat unworthily? But then (mark it) this doth not lie in something merely negative: as, that grace is not in exercise: it is true, it ought to be in exercise; but if it is not so, this is not that eating unworthily. “The wind blows” when and “where it listeth,” and the exercise of grace depends on a gale of the spirit. It lies then in something positive, *viz.* when there are sinful worldly frames, passion, anger, evil concupiscence, carnal desires and affections, prevailing in the heart. Such frames therefore require a forbearing, till there be a composure of spirit: but that the heart be not in frame spiritually (at least, as to the sense and apprehension of the believer) this doth not require a forbearance, or abstaining from the Lord’s Supper. For then perhaps we should seldom be at the Lord’s table, or half be absent, or the minister fail as well as others. We have ground to expect our Lord will meet us in his ways, Isa. lxiv. 5. And how oft doth he come “leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills?”

2. In the outward performance. As when persons talk, or look about, minding others more than what they are engaged in, or sleep, or when there is any irreverent or undue carriage, or considerable wrong management, one taking before another unduly, or drinking too largely, as it was with these Corinthians. In any of these there is an unworthy receiving. Tho’ the persons may be worthy, yet there is an unworthy unbe-

unbecoming performance of so great a work, v. 21, 22. "one is hungry, and another is drunken," i. e. drinks too largely and plentifully for such a solemnity, that there is not sufficient for others.

You see then the different ways of eating and drinking unworthily, and the different degrees in each. Now comes a terrible word, "He shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." God looks upon them as in his presence, whether they look upon themselves so or no. And he will make them know they have to do with holy things, and that as they behave and carry themselves in this ordinance, so they are reckoned to treat the body and blood of the Lord Jesu. But as there are degrees of the unworthiness already spoken to, so also of the guilt; he is guilty either of profaning, or of abusing, or of disorderly or undue using, the body and blood of Christ here signified, according to the degree of the unworthiness mentioned before in eating and drinking. When not only persons unregenerate do partake, but come with wicked ends, or despise the ordinance, as a common thing, without any awe of the divine presence, it is a horrid profanation. When the ordinance is applied to other ends than those for which it was appointed, there is an abuse of it. When believers come with worldly frames, or are disorderly in their behaviours, by sleeping, or otherwise, their is a faulty guilty use of the body and blood of Christ. For whatever it be in eating and drinking that is misdone with respect to the symbols of bread and wine; it is reckoned as done to the body and blood of Christ. For they

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they are so, by representation and signification. As he that abuses the picture of a prince, offers an affront to the prince whose picture it is ; so it is as to the symbols of Christ's body and blood. He is guilty, &c. q. d. What ! don't you know Christ is present ? don't you know what you are doing, that you have to do with holy things, the body and blood of Jesus, tho' not in corporal presence, yet in the meaning and design of the ordinance ?

The relief is, if a man sin against the Father, there is relief in Christ for him ; if he sin against the Son, there is relief in the spirit for him : but if he sin that sin against the Holy Ghost, there is no other to relieve him ; it remaineth therefore unpardonable. This in the text is a sin against the Son : and the Apostle did not intend to signify that it was any unpardonable sin. The Jews that crucified our Lord Jesus Christ, were, almost to the last degree, guilty of the body and blood of the Son of God ; yet were pardoned and saved many of them. Yet I deny not, that a wicked man, coming with a wicked mind, may run upon the pikes of damnation, in profaning of this ordinance. Therefore (saith the Apostle) v. 28. " Let a man examine himself." Let him come with religion, reverence, seriousness, proving his own heart, life, and ends, and approving himself to others who love Jesus Christ, v. 29. " For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

The Greek word *κρίμα* signifies judgment, punishment, chastisement. It is used Luke xxiii. 40. Rom. xiii. 2. Gal. v. 10. where it is not likely

likely it means eternal damnation, but punishment, or some sentence of judgment. It is also used, Luke xx. 47. Rom. iii. 8. 1 Tim. iii. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 3. where perhaps what we mean by damnation is intended, not as the precise signification of the word ; but the context shews, that no less judgment or punishment is designed. In the last quoted place, as if *κρίμα*, judgment, did not fully express his design, he adds perdition, *ἡ απωλεία*, which we render damnation. The compound word *κατάκριμα* signifies law condemnation, Rom. v. 18. and is of a more rigid and forcible signification in the verb than the simple, Mark xvi. 16. “ He that believeth not, *κατακριθήσεται*, shall be damned,” viz. eternally, which we shall find also by-and-by in this context. I wish our translators had not here rendered it damnation, which in the rigid sense, is so contrary to the design of the Apostle. For the simple word [damnation] is of a more horrid and affrightning sound in our English tongue, than the compound [condemnation ;] but it is the contrary in the Greek, at least in this context.

It is therefore (as I take it) judgment either in the conscience, or on the body by affliction, or even by death, that is intended. “ He that eateth and drinketh unworthily” shall feel sore scourges in his conscience, which may sometimes cut deep ; or be chastened with affliction and pain in his body. Which is made out, v. 30. “ For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.” Here the Apostle explains his own meaning. It was a church-miscarriage and sin, and therefore God made breaches upon them, for trifling with holy things, something as he did upon

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upon Uzzah, 2 Sam. vi. 7. He goeth on, v. 31. If we would judge, *διεπίνομεν*, examine, condemn, distinguish ourselves, *viz.* from the world, we should not, *ἐκπινόμεθα*, be judged (the simple verb) with those visitations now mentioned, v. 32. *καὶ πινόμενοι δὲ*, “But being judged,” *viz.* after this sort, “we are chastened of the Lord;” God deals with us as with sons. Thus he explains the judgment, v. 29. *ἵνα μὴ καταπιθῶμεν*, “that we might not be condemned with the world,” that is damned, for we know how it shall go with the world. So that the simple word [judged] and the compound [condemned] are plainly opposed. ’Tis so far then from eating and drinking damnation, v. 29. that it is, that we might not be damned with the world. God hath a gracious design in it towards his elect, and towards believers, if they come unworthily. Many have been converted after their having communicated with a larger sort of christians at the Lord’s table.

Our translators, something aware that the word [damnation] was too harsh, thought good to change it, v. 34. “And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation.” It is *κρίμα*, the same word used, v. 29.

I hope this may be satisfying to such christians as have been over-much terrified with these words of the Apostle; and over-awed into a sinful neglect of their duty. Those who do with reverence and godly fear, approach the Lord’s table, are not concerned in these words of the Apostle, as incurring the guilt of eating and drinking unworthily.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

*Scriptural meditations and reflections, as they were,
for the most part, uttered at the Lord's table.*

GEN. iii. 15.

“ And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed : it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

LE T us view the first gospel, the first promise, the first revelation that ever was made of the sufferings of the Saviour, and redemption thereby. Here we have,

I. The incarnation of Christ. He is the woman's seed ; descended from our first parents, by lineal succession, according to the flesh, as his genealogy is reckoned by Luke, chap. iii. 23—38. and carried up to Adam. He is one therefore of the same race and common nature with ourselves. Partaker of flesh and blood, yet the seed of the woman, Jer. xxxi. 22. Luke i. 35. Gal. iv. 4. having no father of his flesh. Zanchy has well observed, that ‘ God made the first man ‘ immediately out of nothing ; the first woman ‘ immediately out of the man ; and all men and ‘ women besides, by means of our parents, in ‘ ordinary generation ; but the new man Christ ‘ after a new manner, of the woman.’ Hence also he was not under Adam's covenant, not being in a natural way in his loins ; and therefore was not concerned in his sin, nor touched with ori-

original pollution. O the wonders of Christ's incarnation! and what grace was here to the woman, who was first in the transgression! therefore also holy women, having part in the same Saviour, do partake in the same symbols of his death.

II. The sufferings of Christ. 'Thou,' O serpent, 'shalt bruise his heel.' It alludes to a man that kills a serpent, and doth it by treading on him, and the serpent nibbles at and bites his heel. This was a hint, and but a hint, at the sufferings of Christ's human nature: there was a farther revelation thereof in the sacrifices quickly after instituted. The sufferings of Christ are considered here only as they were set on foot by the devil, and the fruit of his malice against Christ; John xiii. 2. v. 27. Christ must get a bruise in this great conflict.

III. The victory and conquest of Christ over satan. "It shall bruise thy head." The woman's seed, O serpent, he shall bruise thy head. The head is the seat of life. A serpent, whose head is bruised and crushed, is destroy'd and kill'd. Now we are not to look upon this conflict as a single duel, wherein Christ and satan only are concerned. But the combat was about others: whether Christ should have a saved people, or the devil should go away with all mankind. On the success therefore of this battle depended our salvation. It was blessed news for many and many thousands, Our Lord has got the day of our grand enemy. Satan in these words is considered as the enemy of all mankind. And many are conquerors through the conquest obtained by our Lord Jesu.

IV.

IV. Distinguishing grace, in taking a chosen seed out of the fallen race. These are called her seed. These words [her seed] do mean either Jesus Christ, the primary seed of Eve; or believers, who are the seed of Christ, and secondary seed of the woman, being the imitators of her faith, as Dr. Arrowsmith interprets. O distinguishing grace, that makes a difference between a seed and a seed, when they are all from one common root!

V. Enmity fixed between these two seeds. I will put enmity, or I do put (as j. and tr.) now at this time. Satan heard it, and felt it, and, I believe, the woman too. This enmity is either good and holy, on the part of Christ and his seed; or sinful and devilish on the part of the serpent and his seed. As to the latter, God is said to put it, 1. By permitting and suffering it to be. Not by infusing it, as a natural; or exhorting or persuading to it, as a moral cause, "But not willing sin, he willingly permits it. That is not done besides his will that is done contrary to his will." Aug. 2. By a providential ordering those things that are the occasion of it. This refers to the exercise and acts of that enmity. He lays those things before them, which their wickedness takes occasion at, unto greater enmity. As, that there is such a people, that they love God, and follow his ways, and are at enmity with satan, and the like. I do put enmity. What if I should say, it was spoken in satan's hearing on purpose? before this threatening it was envy, rather than enmity, that the devil had against man. There was nothing done by our first parents

rents to provoke satan, in the least, to be their enemy. He was not so directly, but as he was an enemy to God, and so to the image of God; as a panther (they say) is such an enemy to man, that he would tear the picture of a man; so would the devil rend and tear the image of God in man, in his enmity against God, John viii. 44. But does he hear that God designs to save man, by a promised seed, fallen man and not fallen angels, and that one of this race should bruise his head, and that God would put an enmity? This stirs all the pride, envy and malice, that is in him, and draws forth the most express and explicit hatred against man, as well as against God. He will try to overturn all God's designs of mercy towards man: and herein it was fulfilled in the very uttering, I do put enmity. Said and done (saith satan,) I refuse not the challenge. I have begun the quarrel, and I will maintain it. To thy own cost, O satan! For, 3. God directs and orders the whole of that enmity to his own glory, and useth it which way he pleafeth, to effect his own designs of grace, and to bring about the good of his people. So in their crucifying the Lord Jesuſ, which was the highest effort of this enmity on the part of satan and his seed.

Furthermore, enmity in the woman promised to be put by God, promiseth faith to her. For enmity to satan includes faith in Christ: and as was observed before, satan heard and felt it; so I believe did the woman, and under the very promise, found the efficacy of it, and found that enmity against that base lyar, tempter, and murderer, that she never could forgive him. O wonderful

wonderful grace to the mother of all living ! to the first transgressor ! and the promise of enmity to her seed promiseth the like to them. Enmity in the serpent's seed bespeaks the woful case of man by the fall. This enmity always has, and always will discover itself, Gal. iv. 29. so contrary are their natures, principles and ends, that they cannot be reconciled.

VI. The speaker, occasion, and manner of speaking these words, are all worthy of consideration; but those things must be left to your own meditations.

This was the first breaking forth of mercy upon fallen man ; the first revelation of that redemption that is set before us in this ordinance. Look back then to the fall of man : sin was the occasion of redemption, though grace was the cause. Sin was the cause of Christ's suffering, and his sufferings the cause of eternal salvation. O cursed sin ! Sin was the door to misery and death. See man turned out of paradise. But here behold the covering God has provided to hide our nakedness, Gen. iii. 21. the righteousness of him, who was our sacrifice. Hear our God approaching to guilty trembling man, in the cool of the day ! behold the early dawn of grace, and the tree of life restored in the midst of the paradise of God !

GEN. iv. 4.

“ And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering.”

WE have but a short history of Abel. We are quickly brought from his birth, v. 2. to his death, v. 8. rightly was his name called vanity, for that is the signification of Abel. He was a godly man, his brother Cain a wicked man. Cain was the first-born: sin is oldest, the first-born of fallen corrupt nature. It was not the matter of the offering, but the manner wherein Cain failed. Abel (I think) was a type of Christ.

I. In him the seed of the woman was exemplified, Gen. iii. 15. These two seeds were already in the world in these two brethren, tho' both one man's children, 1 John iii. 3.—12. “ Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother: and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous;” q. d. Don't you know what was said from the beginning, “ I will put enmity, &c?” You see how soon it wrought. Cain was one of the serpent's seed, and so hated his brother; but Abel was a type and an earnest of that great seed of the woman.

II. Abel brought an offering, and that an acceptable one to the Lord, Heb. xi. 4. “ By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.” So did Jesus Christ, even the sacrifice of himself, a “ sacrifice and an offering of a sweet

sweet smelling favour," Ephes. v. 2. a bloody sacrifice, and not barely an offering.

III. Abel was a righteous man, Mat. xxiii. 35. righteous Abel. So most eminently was Jesus Christ, Mat. xxvii. 19. 1 John ii. 1. "Jesus Christ the righteous." Whose righteousness justifies many, Rom. v. 19.

IV. Abel himself was sacrificed : and so was the Lord Jesus Christ. God had taught our first parents, by instituting of sacrifices, that it must be by death that sin must be atoned for, and death removed : and here in the death of Abel, the righteous seed, he would teach them, it must be by human blood, by the death of the promised seed. Heb. xii. 24. "Ye are come—to Jesus—and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than Abel." So it is in the Greek, *viz.* than sacrific'd and slain Abel, whose blood nevertheless in type spake good things. The glory of the New Testament is this, that we are come "to the blood of sprinkling :" this is the glory of our worship and ordinances. Of old they had the blood of lambs, of goats, of rams, &c. but not this blood of sprinkling. O precious, atoning, cleansing, purifying blood ! O that we might by faith this evening keep the passover, and the sprinkling of blood ! In this phrase, he hath an eye to Exod. xii. 6. or that famous sprinkling of blood, Exod. xxiv. 8. or some of the levitical cleansings by blood. How comes he then to turn it off to Abel ? "The blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than Abel, or than the blood of Abel." Truly, I think, because he saw Abel's murder, as violently slain by his brother, a type

of the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus, who suffered a violent death, and was murdered by those who were, according to the flesh, his brethren. And this truly was not only the most antient instance of shedding of blood, but also blood of a more excellent kind than all the legal sacrifices, being the blood of a righteous person. But (saith he) Christ is better than Abel, and his blood than Abel's blood, though a type of him, and speaketh better things.

V. God had respect to Abel, and to his offering. But O the high regard he had to the offering of his son ! to him and to his sacrifice ! let us come forth by faith, and take a view thereof. What tongue of men or angels can set forth that respect, which the Father hath always had, and hath, to the lamb slain from the foundation of the world, more early than Abel's death ? O sweet and pleasant exercise of faith ! Here let me dwell, where God dwells. Here let my soul delight itself, where the soul of God delights, and is well pleased. Here let me rest, and dwell in love, where God resteth in his love to sinful men. Thro' Christ he first accepteth the person, then the offering. " Eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart ; for God now accepteth thy works," Eccles. ix. 7. Try by faith to keep the gospel passover, by faith to eye the sacrifice of Christ, and we shall have Abel's mercy, to whom the Lord had respect, and to his offering. Bring but Christ with you in the arms of faith, and you cannot fail of acceptance with the Father.

G E N. viii. 20, 21.

“ And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord,—
and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And
the Lord smelled a sweet-favour, &c.”

WHETHER the place where Noah builded this altar were the same place where Cain and Abel offered about sixteen hundred years before, and where Abraham built an altar about four hundred and ten years after, to offer his only son Isaac, as the Jews have a tradition, is not material to determine. I very much question both ; but let us attend other things, and see if we can read a crucified Jesus here. This, save that of Abel, is the most ancient express instance of offering sacrifice. And now surely there was need, if ever, of a sacrifice. The wrath of God had been in a dreadful manner executed upon a sinful world. Where is the first promise ? Where is the seed of the woman ? Is there no mediator to speak a word for sinful man ? Is there no physician, no balm to heal his bleeding wounds ? No atoning blood ? Will not God destroy a rising world, as he hath destroy'd the world that lately was ? These and a thousand such, might be the arguings of the eight persons that were left of that amazing deluge. Try, Noah, and see. It may be, the Lord will smell an offering, as it is, I Sam. xxvi. 19. It may be, he will swear that the “ waters shall no more go over the earth,” and that he will be wroth, in such sort, no more. Let us

then consider this whole burnt-offering in its typical relation to Christ.

I. The occasion was to atone and appease an offended God, who had been provoked with sin, and had just now destroyed a sinful world for their sins. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ was to make atonement on the behalf of a preserved remnant, when he was angry with the world, that they might not perish with the ungodly, and that the world might be preserved for the sake of his elect, Isa. xlvii. 6.—“to restore the preserved of Israel.” And, O my soul, art thou one of the number, as it were of the eight, out of many and many millions, and hath Christ atoned angry justice for thee? “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me!”

II. It was a blood offering which Noah offered upon an altar (as I suppose) of earth, Exod. xx. 24. a burnt offering wholly offered up. Christ is the offerer, the offering, and altar. He was (as I may say) a whole burnt-offering, offered in flames of wrath, on God’s part, and in flames of love, on his own, a clean and sinless sacrifice without spot. He offered himself, his whole soul and body, without reserve. He offered his precious blood: and without shedding of blood is no peace, no pardon. The Hebrew word for burnt-offerings, constantly used, signifies ascensions, or goings up, because of the ascension or going up of the flame and smoke from the altar. O blessed ascension, and going up of a sweet favour, of atoning efficacy, from this altar!

III. It

III. It was offered up to God. For so we read, the altar was built unto Jehovah. So was Christ. He that undertook for men, must know he had to do with God. Heb. ii. 17. chap. v. 1. "In things pertaining to God, to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." chap. ix. 14. "Christ offered himself to God." And now if God will accept the offering, 'tis all well. Hence was that prayer for him, suitable to the Old Testament day, the "Lord remember all thy offerings, and turn thy burnt-sacrifice to ashes, Selah," Psal. xx. 3. that is, accept it; which was signified of old by fire sent down from heaven, to consume the sacrifice, Lev. ix. 24. Thou, O blessed Jesus! didst prepare thy heart to draw nigh to God, and venture up into the fiery mount, when no other durst draw nigh. Thou didst undertake to hold the hands of angry justice, or rather to receive the blow, that it might not fall upon my guilty head, Jer. xxx. 21. Isa. xxvii. 5.

IV. The issue was, "The Lord smelled a sweet savour." A favour of rest, Heb. in which perhaps there is some allusion to the name of Noah, which signifies rest. The seventy have it οσμὴ εὐωδίας, which phrase they also use in Leviticus, and the Apostle, as it should seem, from them, Ephes. v. 2. which we render, "an offering, and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour." There is no sweeter contemplation, no exercise of faith more pleasing and delightful, than on this head; how our God smelled a sweet savour, a smell of fragrancy, that was pleasing to him: or favour of rest. So he says, in *qui acquiesco*, in whom I rest, Matt. iii. 17. and in

Zephaniah iii. 17. "He will rest in his love." But O the sweet perfume in the nostrils of God ! for so the expression is Deut. xxxiii. 10. "They shall put incense at thy nose," Heb. or, as Pagnine renders, to thy nostrils ; spoken of Levi, whose Urim and whose Thummim were to be transferred to his holy one, Jesus Christ, whom he so often tempted in the wilderness, v. 8. Levi, as a type of Christ, must offer incense daily in the holy place, and once a year in the holiest of all, "and whole burnt-sacrifice upon his altar." But O the divine perfume from the altar, Christ, when he made his soul an offering for sin ! would I could set it forth unto you ! but it is no way so taken in as by faith : faith can take it in, if God will shew it you ; and you also will smell a sweet favour. And unless we do so, we know not the meaning of it.

Moreover, God promises not to drown the world again, and makes gracious promises ; and blesses Noah ; and makes a covenant, the type of the covenant of grace, as a covenant of promise, Isa. liv. 9, 10. and sets the rainbow in the cloud as a token of it. Hence the "rainbow is round about the throne," Rev. iv. 3. to teach us, that all the goings forth of God towards his people are in a covenant-way. O ! what will not God do in a way of mercy ? he will forget his wrath, and lay aside his anger, when he smells a sweet favour from a sacrificed Jesus. Now then behold him mild and merciful, appeased, and well pleased in his dear Son.

G E N. xxii.

Abraham offering up his son Isaac.

LE T us look back to the time when, to the place where, our father Abraham offered up his son Isaac at the command of God. Isaac was the son of the promise, born by virtue of the promise, at a time, and in a way beyond the force of nature. He stood then as a lively type and figure of our Lord Jesus.

Something more than two thousand years from the creation, in the mid-way between the beginning of time, and the coming of Christ in the flesh, God would give a specimen of that great love, that gave Christ to die for us ; of that ready obedience of our Lord Jesus to be made a sacrifice ; and a lively figure of that sacrifice, which was to be offered up. He would teach the ancient fathers, that redemption must be not only by blood, but by the blood of the son of promise, that he must be the sacrifice. Now here see,

I. On the part of Abraham. 1. A lively faith, Heb. xi. 17, 18, 19. "by faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac, &c." It is not easy to express what actings of faith here were, looking thro' the dark cloud, and eyeing the power, goodness, and faithfulness of God. "Strong in faith," Rom. iv. 20. O let us seek to be children of Abraham's faith ! 2. Prevailing love. It was love to God overcoming his natural affection to his only Son, Gen. xxii. 12. "Now I know thou fearest God." Fear in the Old Testament is

love in the New, Psal. xxxi. 19. "O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for those that fear thee!" in the New Testament it is constantly those that love thee, 1 Cor. ii. 9. James i. 12. by which Psal. cxxx. 4. may be expounded. Such love and such fear are consistent and concomitant.

3. Ready and cheerful obedience, with great self-denial, Gen. xxii. 1, 2, 3. Here was a trial now, "offer up thy son, thine only son Isaac, for a burnt-offering." He makes all ready, goes to the appointed place, and there goes about that great and difficult work. What manner of obedience was here? Thus works wrought with his faith, and were the genuine fruit of it, James ii. 21, 22. Such faith, and such love, and such obedience, the fruit of both, become our approach to the Lord's table.

II. On the part of Isaac. He goes with his father to the place. "Here's the fire, and here's the wood: but where's the lamb (faith he) for a burnt-offering? O tender and affecting words! Isaac did not know, but Christ well knew, what was designed concerning him. Again, when they came to the place, Isaac submits to be the sacrifice, yields himself to his father for that purpose, who no doubt instructed him in the will and command of God; and he submits. Nothing to the contrary appears. He was old enough to have made resistance. He carried the wood for the offering, v. 6. But God so disposed his spirit, that he might be a fit type of our Lord Jesus.

III. On the part of God. Here was 1. His command: All was done at his order, and according thereto, as to time and place and every thing.

thing. So Jesus Christ was “ delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,” Acts ii. 23. 2. His prohibition, as to the intended execution, v. 11, 12. “ Lay not thy hand upon the lad.” O how seasonable! “ In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.” 3. His substitution of a ram into Isaac’s room. According to v. 8. “ God will provide himself a lamb, &c.” Thus God accepted a substitute in the room of poor sinners, the holy lamb of God, when the knife of justice was stretched forth against the guilty sinner; but no substitute was accepted in Christ’s stead; no prohibition of his death; blessed be God! He did not die by proxy, nor offer the blood of others, but his own blood. 4. His approbation hereof, v. 12, 16—18. God declares his acceptance, and how highly he was pleased with this obedience of Abraham. “ Now I know, that thou fearest God.” ‘ Knowledge is sometimes taken for approbation; q. d. I approve this fact as a testimony of thy fear of me, since thy affection to thy Isaac is extinguished by the more powerful flame of affection to my will and command; I now accept thee, and count thee a meet subject of my choicest benefits.’ Charnock. 5. The instruction he intended hereby. ’Tis true, it was for trial. God would prove Abraham, and call him forth to be a great example to future generations: but it was also for great and eminent instruction in the glorious work of redemption. And this I think was an higher end than the former.

Here we may read in type the great love of God in giving his Son, his only Son, the Son of

his love. Do we not by this know, that he loves poor sinners? there must be human blood, and he would provide a body for his Son.

Here we read the great willingness of Christ, the holy lamb of God, to be a propitiatory sacrifice, saying, "Lo, I come." No resisting or struggling when he was bound, Mark xv. 8. Acts viii. 32.

Here we see him bearing his cross, as Isaac did the wood (John xix. 17.) and bound on the altar. And for the place, it was mount Moriah, where also our Lord was crucified. It is very probable it was that part of Moriah, which was after called Calvary. Moriah was of some extent, Gen. xxii. 2. the land of Moriah, on one of the mountains, near to the place where the temple was after built, 2 Chron. iii. 1. God shewed Abraham the place, precisely the place; q. d. Here must the great Son of promise one day die; here must the great sacrifice one day be offered up. Here see it done in type; here see it done by faith, John viii. 56.

Here we may read the Father himself stretching forth the sacrificing-knife against his Son. Nor did he hold his hand. Herein is love, that God gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And now is any of them as a right-hand, or a right eye? Let us consent to have them cut off, or plucked out. Let us learn of Abraham to offer all that is dear to us. Let them be crucified. Shall our dearest Lord die? And shall our sins live? God forbid!

G E N. xxvii. 15. 27, 28, 29.

WHEN Jacob went to obtain his father's blessing, he comes in goodly raiment, a borrowed robe, his elder brother's, desirable raiment, that was ready for the purpose, raiment of a goodly and pleasing smell. O here let us receive instruction how to come to our Father for a blessing, how to come to his table. The garment we must come in is another's, is ready prepared, and is at hand, if faith is so to put it on. It is our elder brother's. 'Tis precious and costly, 'tis ornamental, 'tis infinitely pleasing to our God, and fragrant in his nostrils. Ambrose, as I have somewhere read, makes use of this text to set forth imputed righteousness. And if any shall think it too harsh an interpretation, yet let them own it may fitly be used by way of allusion, to illustrate that glorious doctrine by.

Jacob had also prepared two kids of the goats, such as were wont to be offered in sacrifice. These he brings to his father. It was savoury meat such as he loved. It is very probable in freedom and friendship, Jacob did also eat with his father.

Let us also come to a slain Jesus, and by him to the Father. O what savoury meat is here! what food for faith! Such a repast we have at the Lord's table. Thus, when the prodigal returned; the father said, "Let us eat and be merry," Luke xv. 23. in token of friendship, and a covenant of peace. Divine justice fed on Christ, took its fill, and was infinitely delighted with this food of the offering. So the expression is, Lev. iii. ii. "It is the food of the offering." And it

it is strangely emphatical, and repeated, v. 16. “It is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet favour.” And he is not speaking of any thing that the priest should eat, or the people; but of the kidneys, and the fat, &c. which was to be burnt upon the altar. This is the food of the offering: O my God! let me sit down and feed with thee on thy dying Son.

Jacob coming thus, his father will have him approach, come near and kiss him. He speaks with paternal love, my son; and particularly commends the smell of his raiment, which is (saith he) as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed. Thus when we come for our father’s blessing, and come by and to a dying Jesus, and come in his raiment, I mean his righteousness; our God will make us come near him, admit us into near communion, and will embrace us. So the father of the returning prodigal fell on his neck and kissed him, Luke xv. 20. Jesus also has his kisses for his favourites, and O how sweet they are! Cant. i. 2. And tho’ we have nothing of our own but rags, and stinking filthy garments, yet our father will praise his son’s robe, and smell a sweet perfume.

The blessing we shall receive is the highest good, the choicest benefits, shadowed forth by the dew of heaven, the dew of divine grace and favour. The blessings of temporals are also in covenant. All things are ours, for we have him who is heir of all; and let God’s enemies enjoy the possession his time, we grudge it not. They have need enough to have what they have: it is their portion. Poor Esau! thou gotst but half a blessing; for

for Jacob was before thee. Dominion over the wicked also belongs to this blessing, which the saints shall have in the morning of the resurrection. And there's a curse on all that curse, and a blessing on all that bless, God's people, tho' unworthy of the least of his favours. Thus will our God and Father own, embrace and delight in us here, and intitle us to the everlasting inheritance hereafter.



GEN. xxviii. 16. God's house.

“ And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not, v. 17. And he was afraid, and said, how dreadful is this place ! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

WE again come into the house of God, and sit at our father's table. It is the privilege of children so to do. But oh ! How great a privilege ! How undeserved ! Nothing is so sweet as to see ourselves children, in the right of our elder brother drawing nigh to our God. Shall we not be as those that dream, or as Jacob awaking out of sleep, and say, “ This is the gate of heaven ?” From henceforth let it be called Beth-el.

A blessed night Jacob had, almost as ever man had, in this world, I would say, but that there is no night in the other, in the upper world. How comfortable was that morning, whose spreading beams

beams found his soul so refreshed with the enjoyments of the night, and still with God ! Scarce did he know who had been with him, where he had been, or what to call the place, in the joyful surprize. He recovered himself a little, and then he knew, “ the Lord was in this place.” He left a sweet fragrancy “ on the handles of the lock,” Song, v. 5. Even so, my beloved, put in thy hand, and not only leave some token thou hast been there, but open the door and come in, and dwell there for ever. Discoveries of God leave those impressions behind, which discover whence they are.

It was another kind of night our Lord once experienced ; the blackest, darkest, and dolefullest night that ever the creation knew. Can we think there was joy in heaven among the angels in such a night, when the glorious sun of righteousness suffered such an eclipse ? And yet, O my dearest Lord ! unless thou hadst known the dolours of that night, and of the following day (if that were day, when darkness was over the whole land for three whole hours,) my soul had known the horrors of everlasting darkness, of eternal night. Yet when he had passed over the brook he lift up his head on high.

The mystery of the incarnation, and blessed issues of it, were represented here to Jacob. The height of Christ’s person reaching to heaven, his abasement and condescension in stooping to this earth, were set before him ; also the joining heaven and earth, the blessed reconciliation between God and man by Christ incarnate. That sweet commerce and communion that is established
twixt

twixt us, by God in the flesh. Angels and men, God and men, can now converse together, John i. 51. "The angels of God ascending and descending familiarly on the son of man." This is the ladder Jacob saw. The ascent of prayers to God, the descent of blessings from God, are by this ladder. Let us ascend thereon some steps heaven-ward this evening.

The same mystery is to be represented at this time to the view of faith. If we can behold it, we shall say, "This is the house of God, this is the gate of heaven." Could we go to Beth-el, where Jacob was, we might not see what Jacob saw: and then what would it avail us? But here, "We see, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord; and O that we may be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord!"

GEN. xxxvii. xxxix. xl. chapters.

Jesus Christ is our spiritual Joseph.

I. **H**E had many enemies, and those his own brethren, and those of his own nation, as Joseph had. Joseph's brethren hated him. "The archers sorely grieved him, and shot at him." So it was with Jesus Christ, John i. 11. and chap. vii. 5.

II. He was betrayed and sold, and his death conspired, by his brethren according to the flesh, as Joseph was. Our Lord was sold by one

one of his disciples for thirty pieces of silver. The price (saith he) "a goodly price that I was prized at of them," Zech. xi. 12, 13.

III. It was for our ransom that he was sold. It was to redeem us to God. O blessed design, and blessed effect of his death ! So Joseph was sold for the good of his very brethren who sold him, and to preserve them and theirs alive, though they did not know it, much less intend it.

IV. Joseph was first in a suffering state, and cast into prison, and then advanced. He was first cast into prison, and then exalted to great honour. Our Lord Jesus Christ passed through sufferings, and the prison of the grave, to his exaltation and glory, Luke xiv. 26. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ? 1 Pet. i. 11. The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

V. Joseph being advanced was the lord-treasurer of all the provisions and stores of corn in Egypt. To him they must go for supply, Gen. xli. 55. " Go to Joseph." Herein he was an eminent type of the Lord Jesus. He is the lord-treasurer of all grace. And he is so, as exalted, as advanced at the Father's right-hand, Col. i. 19. " It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell." Go to Jesus, soul. In him is all our supply of soul-food and spiritual provision. Thus, as Joseph was victorious over all difficulties, and " his bow abode in strength," Gen. xlix. 23, 24. so it was with Christ, who overcame, and " sat down with the Father in his throne."

VI. His brethren were made to say, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother," Gen. xlvi. 21. So some of the crucifiers of our Lord Jesus were made to cry out, "What shall we do?" Acts ii. It was well for them that ever they had a sense of it. O grace! wonderful grace to the greatest and vilest of sinners! Who after this would ever despair of mercy?

VII. Joseph, after much strange and harsh carriage, very sweetly and affectionately made himself known to his brethren, saying, I am Joseph. Our Lord Jesus sometimes seems to carry it strange to his chosen and ransomed ones. He speaks roughly to them, as to that woman of Canaan, Mat. xv. 21.—28. He would humble them, bring them to his foot, make them cry earnestly, exercise their faith and patience, and put a price upon his own favours to them. He makes them sorry for a time, that their repentance might be true, and their joy the greater, 2 Cor. vii. 8—10. How sweet at last are the discoveries of his love! He lets them know, that though they had wounded and grieved him, and their sins pierced him, yet it was so ordained by God, and designed for eternal good to them.

O let us view our Lord Jesus at his table, as he who was sold for us, betrayed unto death, but not without his own knowledge and consent, but in the greatness of his love and grace to us-ward!

And let us view him in all his glorious riches, in his high advancement, and glorious fulness of spiritual provision. O let us go to our Joseph! Here we shall have the richest supplies.

And

And let us see him discovering and making himself known to us in this feast that he hath made for us his brethren. Here it is he discovers himself, and is known of his "in breaking of bread," Luke xxiv. 35. let us hear him saying, as once he said to Paul, "I am Jesus."



Exod. xii.

Christ our passover.

THE Lord Jesus Christ himself is the christian passover. He was intended and signified by the passover of old, and is therefore the great truth thereof, 1 Cor. v. 7. "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." He is so substantially. Yet in a lower sense, and by way of representation, the Lord's Supper is our passover. In the nature of an ordinance this is so; that is, it comes in the room of the passover of old, and has those uses and ends to us, with advantage, which that had to them, though that were not properly a type of this. It was at the very time of the passover when this ordinance was instituted, and not till the last passover was celebrated that ever was, or could of right be kept. Now,

I. The passover was an ordinance of commemoration. It was to commemorate their deliverance, and coming out of Egypt. Their bondage-state in Egypt was a figure of the natural condition of poor sinners, their bondage to sin and

and satan. Israel's bondage was very great, that their deliverance might be the greater. But O how great is our spiritual bondage, and how miserable and deplorable our condition by means thereof! yet here lies a difference, they were sensible of it, but poor sinners are unsensible, and do not sigh by reason of the bondage, and cry for anguish of spirit, as they did.

Now in their deliverance,

1. There was a revelation of God in Christ, and consequently (in some darker manner) of the divine persons, Exod. iii. 6. "The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." It was Jesus Christ that appeared to Moses in the burning bush, Acts vii. 30. "An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush." Now what angel was he, who could or dare say, "I am the God of Abraham, &c." unless the angel of God's presence, the Lord Jesus Christ? Besides, this is the name revealed to Moses, "I am that I am," Exod. iii. 14. And doth not Christ tell us his name is I AM? John viii. 58.

2. There was a revelation of the glorious perfections of God. Of his wisdom. He was not at a loss for ways to bring it about. And how did he still take the wise in their own craftiness? Of his power, Rom. ix. 17.—"I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, &c." Therefore it is said to be with an outstretched arm, and an high hand. All the miracles done in the wilderness, and at the Red-Sea, were proofs of an Almighty power. Of his covenant faithfulness. It was in pursuance
of

of his covenant made four hundred and thirty years before to Abraham, Gal. iii. 17. This account is given of it, Exod. ii. 24. "God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." What though Abraham be dead long ago, and though Israel may have almost forgot the covenant, or forgot to plead it, or are willing to stay in Egypt? yet (faith God) "I remember, &c." There could be no higher discovery of God's covenant-faithfulness than this, except that of which it was a type. Just thus, it is by virtue of a covenant made, long before we believe, with Jesus Christ concerning us, that we are freed and delivered from spiritual bondage: and not for any thing done by us before or at the time. God remembers his covenant with Christ, and takes us from the devil's snare. Again, of his goodness and grace. Distinguishing grace, electing grace. O how did he distinguish between the Israelites and Egyptians! He put redemption between them, as in the margin, Exod. viii. 23. Just thus also are the redeemed of the Lord a distinguished people, a chosen people. Spiritual redemption is of such a people. A favour not shewn to others, but shewn to every one to whom the covenant and promise was made in Christ Jesus. Lastly, of his justice. There was an awful display of his justice against his enemies when he saved his peculiar people.

But O the wisdom, the power, the mighty hand, the out-stretched arm, the truth, the goodness and awful justice of God in our deliverance and redemption by Jesus Christ! Great is his faithfulness!

The

The passover was in commemoration of that deliverance, Exod. xii. 14. The Lord's Supper is an ordinance to commemorate our spiritual redemption, as it was wrought by Jesus Christ, and our personal freedom by converting, calling grace, when we are called into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

II. The passover was an ordinance of prefiguration. It prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ a spiritual redeemer. And being a remembrance of temporal redemption, it was the more apt to be a type of spiritual.

1. The matter of the ordinance was a lamb. An innocent and harmless creature. With an eye to this, Christ is called the lamb of God, John i. 29. "Behold the lamb of God," 1 Pet. i. 19. "A lamb without spot."

2. This lamb must be without blemish, Exod. xii. 5. else it were not a fit type of Christ. He was without the least blemish or spot of sin, Heb. vii. 25. "Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."

3. This lamb must be taken up some days before, and soon after slain. It must be taken up the tenth day, and killed on the evening of the fourteenth; so was our Lord taken up and apprehended by divine justice beforehand, and afterwards crucified by the hands of sinful men. Or thus, he was devoted and sanctified by baptism at about thirty years of age, Luke iii. 23. and put to death on the thirty-fourth. Thus Mr. Mather on the types, 2d. edit. p. 419. 'Christ entered into his public ministry (saith he) the thirtieth year of his life, which is the tenth
thrice

‘ thrice told, and suffered not till the four and
‘ thirtieth.’ Had he not been slain, the lamb had
profited us nothing. He was a slain lamb. To
him the beasts and elders sing that song, “ Thou
art worthy, for thou wast slain,” Rev. v. 9. And
he it is who is “ in the midst of the throne as it
had been slain,” ver. 6.

4. The lamb must be roasted. This must be
the way of preparation, and not any other. To
signify, no doubt, the fire of God’s anger, and
heat of his wrath, which Christ endured for us.
The wrath of God is oft compared to fire : see
Jer. iv. 4. and this Christ sustained.

5. The lamb must be eaten, and that with bit-
ter herbs, and the whole of it eaten. Of these
things I cannot speak particularly, only in a word.
Christ will profit nothing, if he is not eaten.
When “ His flesh is meat indeed,” there must be
an eating of his flesh, and drinking his blood,
or we have no life in us, John vi. 53—58. And
why with bitter herbs ! Perhaps to teach self-de-
nial and repentance. There must be sorrow and
grief for sin, working with faith. And why the
whole therefore ? Exod. xii. 9, 10. Surely to
teach that we must have a whole Christ, even in
all he is and has, and in all his offices. Christ
and his cross. Nor would a true believer have
any thing less.

5. Every household a lamb. To signify per-
haps, that the grace of the gospel should go very
much by households, which we find in the New
Testament, “ Thou shalt be saved, and thy
house,” Acts xvi. 31. Not thy seed, so largely
as it was with Abraham, till it becomes a nation,
but

but thy house. And to signify, that Christ would have every one to have a portion, and every one enough, and every one of his to be fill'd with gospel-provision.

III. The passover was at first institution an ordinance for protection and preservation. How was that? Why! They must take the blood of the paschal lamb, and sprinkle upon the door-posts, &c. v. 7. to signify both the shedding and the sprinkling of blood, even the blood of Jesus, Heb. ix. 22. Our hearts and consciences must be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, 1 Pet. i. 2. which is therefore called "the blood of sprinkling," Heb. xiii. 24. Else our consciences can't be pure and clean, unless thus sprinkled, and so not safe. This blood is our safety. Nor can any perish where it is. O get under the protection of this precious blood. There the destroying angel has no commission as a messenger of death. It was therefore called the passover, because of the destroying angel passing over their houses, v. 13, 23, 27. The Israelites in after passovers might remember this protection, tho' it was only in this first celebration it had this particular use.

Now when Christ is called our passover, it means as the paschal lamb was metonymically so called. Christ is the true paschal lamb, or the truth signified thereby. Or, when the passover was an ordinance of prefiguration, Christ and his sacrifice, Christ and his sufferings, Christ as the food of faith, was prefigured thereby. And as it was an ordinance for protection; so is Jesus Christ. Be thou blessed Lord, my strong rock, whereto I may continually resort.

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of representation, setting before us those things which the passover typed out, those good things already come. Let us view those things under the symbols of bread and wine, which they had under the type of a roasted lamb, in the eating whereof they also made use of wine.

A P P E N D I X.

THIS last hint may serve to explain what we read in Luke xxii. 17—20. where some may think the story somewhat confused: for he speaks of the cup before breaking the bread, and then again after supper. The former was the passover-cup. Ainsworth out of Maimony gives a large relation of the manner of celebrating the passover, on Exod. xiii. ‘ Together with the ‘ paschal lamb (saith he) they used to drink wine; ‘ for it was a feast of the Lord, and a sacrifice, ‘ and therefore to be celebrated with joy, and ‘ with wine, Deut. xvi. 11, 12. Numb. xv. 5. ‘ They say, every one, both of men and wo- ‘ men, is bound to drink that night four cups of ‘ wine without fail: and tho’ he be poor—he ‘ must not drink less than those four cups. He ‘ blesseth God for every of these cups severally, ‘ and for the fourth cup he accomplisheth the ‘ praise, and blesseth for it the blessing of the ‘ song, which is, “ All thy works praise thee, ‘ O Lord, &c.” Psal. cxlv. 10. and blesseth God ‘ that created the fruit of the vine, and tasteth ‘ nothing at all after it all the night, except wa- ‘ ter.’ See more in Ainsworth.

Let

Let me conclude with this inference. Is Christ our true passover? What have we to do with that Jewish feast, or the time of it, now called Easter?

‘ Easter or Aester was the Saxon goddess which they sacrificed unto in the month of April, whom the Britons worshipped by the name of Adraste, the same with the Phænician Astarte and the Sidonian an Ashtoreth,’ I Kings xi. 5.
“ Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians.”
Gale’s Court of the Gentiles, p. 1. l. 1. c. 12. p. 85. l. 2. c. 2. Here is antiquity truly, but a very bad original. Ashtoreth or Ashtaroth, by leaving out the termination, becomes Ashtar. And how easily does that become Easter? As to that in Acts xii. 4. “ intending after Easter to bring him forth, &c.” It is in the Greek μελά τὸ πασχα, after the passover. And it might as well have been rendered Easter through the New Testament, as here. The dreadful dissention that happened in the church so early as in the second century about the time of celebrating Easter was doubtless a just rebuke upon them all for their judaizing in this point. Victor, bishop of Rome, excommunicated the Eastern churches, for keeping Easter at the same time the Jews did; whereas the Romans in remembrance of Christ’s resurrection, did observe the first Sunday after the full moon of March. This was about the year 198. Euseb. l. 5. c. 25, 26. There is an excellent and large testimony of Socrates Scholaisticus, l. 5. c. 22. against the observation of this feast. There would have been no contention about observing the Jewish feast of passover, had they seen in clear gospel-light, that Jesus Christ is our passover.

Exod. xxiv.

The glory of the God of Israel.

THE God of glory appeared to Moses, Aaron, and Abihu, with seventy of the elders of Israel. He appeared in glory, yet not as an absolute God, but as the God of Israel, v. 10. "And they saw the God of Israel, and there were under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness," ver. 16. "And the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai,"—ver. 17. "And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount." If ever any thing were great, majestic, and surprising, it is what we have in these verses. It was (I conceive with Mr. Pool in his annotations) an appearance of Christ, the man Christ, as an essay and pledge of his future incarnation, not in meanness and abasement, but having his robes of glory on, cloathed with honour and majesty, covered with light as with a garment. Lo! This is the God of Israel, the angel that spake to him [to Moses] in the mount Sinai. "Thy throne, O God," O eternal Son of God! "is for ever and ever." What a blessed sight will it be for glorified eyes to behold a glorified Redeemer!

Here observe, I. The time of this appearance: it was the time of dedicating the first covenant or testament, and of very solemn sacrificing in order thereto. Read v. 1. to the 8th inclusive: which the Apostle quotes, Heb. ix. 18, 19, 20,
21,

21, 22. where he concludes, “Almost all things are by the law purged with blood ; and without shedding of blood there is no remission.” And which the prophet seems to have an eye upon, Zach. ix. 11. when he saith, “By the blood of thy covenant, &c.” In that first testament there was the covenant, and the blood of it ; so there is in the new. But, pray don’t think that first covenant was a covenant of works. You can have no right thoughts of these things, if you take it so. It matters not much whether you call it the Old Testament, or a typical covenant of grace, or the former edition of the covenant of grace, or a church covenant between God and Israel, or an administration of the covenant of grace in order to a church-state and relation ; or such-like. But, to conceive of it as a covenant of works, is gross and absurd, and confounds the whole system of the Old Testament.

II. The mildness and grace of this appearance : for this covenant, and the blood of it, were typical of the New Testament; and the blood of it, Heb. ix. 15, 16, 17, 18. “Whereupon, neither the first testament was dedicated without blood ;” q. d. seeing this was a type of that, it was meet it should not, Exod. xxiv. 11. “And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand : also they saw God, and did eat and drink :” they saw him, as the God of Israel, appearing in grace and favour to a very sinful people. Here was majesty, and yet mercy ; glory, and yet grace : he keeps his awful distance, and yet lets them come near. When he appears as a consuming fire, yet he is Israel’s God. Justice is reconcilable, yea, reconciled with mercy.

To this text the Apostle has respect, Heb. xii. 29. “ For our God is a consuming fire.” He don’t say, an absolute God, or God out of Christ, tho’ that is true indeed: but he faith, our God, or as it is in the text, the God of Israel. It comes in as an argument with believers, that they should have grace, to serve God acceptably, with reverence, and godly fear; as Moses and Aaron would worship Israel’s God, when they were under his eye, and saw his glory. Yea, our God even Jesus Christ, is a consuming fire; 1. In respect of majesty, brightness and glory. For such was this representation here. 2. In respect of justice. When he comes as the great eternal judge, so Christless sinners will find him. But the representation here was mild and merciful, tho’ majestic and glorious. O how gracious is he, in the day of his grace and mercy! But kiss the Son lest he be angry, &c. By this also may the prophet (Isa. xxxiii. 14, 15.) be expounded: “ Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?—with everlasting burnings?” With that God which is as a consuming fire? Not hypocrites and Christless ones. If they cannot bear the presence of his glory and majesty, how can they bear the presence of his holiness and justice? The answer follows, he that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly. To them all this glory shall be familiar, and they shall be able to endure his presence. O thou God of Israel! when thou wilt shew me thy glory as cloathed with majesty, let me see thee cloathed with mercy. If I behold thee as a consuming fire, let me see justice also mine, and I will not fear to draw near unto thee, Deut. iv. 20, and 24.

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The appearances of God of old were visible : that dispensation was more carnal. We are ready to wish for such appearances of God again ; it is because we are carnal. If we have an eye of faith to see the God of Israel withal, we need not such appearances, till Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven.

"Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you ;" so spake Moses on that solemn day, when "he took the blood and sprinkled it on the people." Here now in this solemnity is the New Testament, and the blood of that testament represented. We are pointed to that time, when it was dedicated by the Redeemer's blood. And now, let us eye that blood as the blood of the covenant. I say, this evening, behold the blood of the covenant. The testament is founded on it, dedicated by it, and all the blessings thereof purchased thereby. O precious blood ! O let me be within the reach of some drops of this saving blood ! O let me have a part in the testator's death, in his New Testament, and the blood wherewith it is ratified, and the blessings given as legacies therein, and I desire no more. Thus drawing near to God in the new covenant by the Mediator's blood, we shall see, we shall hear, and converse with Israel's God : but see all calm around him ; a clear and peaceable sky, "the body of heaven in its clearness." You see him as a consuming fire in the sacrifice of Christ, see his glory and majesty : yet he will not lay his hand upon you ; his hand of justice has been on Christ. You may see God, and eat and drink.

Such a time was that when the great sacrifice was offered, and a greater than this in the text. Such a time is this, if we have faith to see it, and our God will make it so; a covenanting time, and of sprinkling of blood, and of drawing near to God, and of seeing the God of Israel as a consuming fire, yet a reconciled God.



EXOD. xxv. 8, 9, 21, 22.

“And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle,—so shall ye make it, ver. 21, 22. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark, and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony, that I shall give thee, and there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy-seat, &c.”

CHIRST is the sanctuary, he is the ark, and he is the mercy-seat. He is the sanctuary or holy place of God’s abode. Nor would our God dwell with men, with sinful men, if he had not found this dwelling-place. He is the true tabernacle, Heb. viii. 2. John i. 14. Psal. lxxviii. 18. “Thou hast received gifts for men [Heb. in the man] that the Lord God might dwell” [viz. in him, and so in them.] This true tabernacle was reared, that I may dwell (faith God) with them. O blessed design! hence it is that God dwells with men on earth. And

And here is an answer to that posing question of Solomon, "Will God indeed dwell with men on earth?" It ceases to be a wonder, or rather the mystery is disclosed, when God has reared a tabernacle, prepared a body for Jesus Christ, and dwelleth in the man. For now he goes on, and dwells in every saint as his temple, in every church as his house, John xiv. 23. Ephes. ii. 22. till all is swallowed up in the New Jerusalem glory, when "the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

In this ordinance we see an incarnate Jesus, and are led to consider the great gift of the Father, the great love of God in sending his Son, and Christ's taking our flesh.

Again, there was the ark of the covenant. A type too of the human nature of Christ in the meanness of his outward condition: but when the ark made of wood was overlaid with gold, it figured the excellency and glory of Christ's person, the worth and dignity of the man in union with God. And when the covenant (*viz.* the ten commandments) was kept in the ark, it typified, that in Christ the law was kept, and altogether fulfilled. O see the law kept in the ark of the covenant! And when it was so, it is through him that God is a God in covenant. The ark was the most sacred utensil in the tabernacle. Now this was placed between the cherubims, and above upon it was the mercy-seat, which was the covering of the ark, and therefore the covering of the law, to hide the threatening

ening and curse thereof from the eye of God, who sat upon that mercy-seat.

O glorious representation! God upon a mercy-seat! So we view him at the Lord's table. Christ is the propitiatory or mercy-seat, the propitiation for our sins, the covering that hides them, and the curse due to them by the law. Thus, when the law is kept in Christ, and the curse removed, then God is propitious and merciful to guilty sinners, and then he will meet his people, and bless them, he will commune with them from that mercy-seat.

This ordinance is the great solemnity where we may believe and hope to meet with God, and where he will come and hold communion with us, and manifest himself unto us, as from his mercy-seat, through the atonement of the blood of Christ.

C O N C L U S I O N.

IS Christ the true tabernacle, in whom that type was fulfilled? Then we have done with tabernacles and places under the gospel. Places for the worship of God, convenient and necessary to the worshippers, but not to him whom we worship, we bless God for; especially we have reason to do so, when they were so lately threatened to be demolished, by those whose rage and fury God hath now restrained. But these houses (I will not say, houses of God, but houses for God's worship) were not typified by that of old. Nor had the tabernacle or temple (which was one, and but one at one time) any respect

respect unto or resemblance with places for worship, under the gospel. The relative holiness of those places (which is all they challenge) was a type of the real holiness of Jesus Christ, and perhaps of the church of Christ, I mean, his people, in whom he dwells : but not of any relative holiness in meeting-places. The tabernacle was holy, because God said, " This is the house, and this is the place, where I will be worshipped." But this he hath not said of any place whatsoever, since the destruction of the second temple ; but rather the contrary, that there should be altogether no difference of place under the gospel. Remarkable were the prophecies of the Old Testament to this purpose, Isa. lxvi. 1. " Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool : where is the house ye build unto me ? And where is the place of my rest ?" What house can ye build suitable to my Majesty ? Or that can be a dwelling for me who fill heaven and earth ? No material temple will do, v. 2. " For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord : but to this man will I look that is poor, &c." You can bring no materials but what my hand hath made, what then can such a building be to me ? Besides, those things have been, *viz.* a tabernacle and temple built to my name, they have been, but are no more in request ; for it is a prophecy of the gospel-day, as all that goes before, and that follows after, shews. But now my dwelling shall be in true believers hearts, those living temples. Thus in effect Stephen expounds this place, in justifying himself against that charge, that he

had said, “Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs that Moses delivered us,” Acts vi. 14. I say, he quotes this of Isaiah with a remarkable preface concerning the tabernacle and temple, Acts vii. 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. And taxeth them as “stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears,” for resisting the design of God in the gospel, v. 51. And as the temple was to come to its end; so all temple-worship (strictly speaking) was to cease. As it follows, Isa. lxvi. 3. that text does not mean, that hypocritical formal worshippers are thus abominable to God, even in attending on ordinances of his own appointment (though that be true) but that temple-worship should altogether cease; so that “killing an ox is as slaying a man, sacrificing a lamb as cutting off a dog’s neck, &c.” yet the poor stubborn Jews chose their own ways (as it follows) in worshipping of God according to Moses’s law, in opposition to gospel-worship. See also Mal. i. 11. a very full text, and clearly prophesying of the gospel-day. And in the New Testament, Mat. xviii. 20. John iv. 20—24. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

Of old the place was a part of the worship, being sanctified by his command, and the symbols of his presence. As with respect to time, holy time is a part of the worship; such is the Lord’s-day: other time that is common may be for holy work, but adds nothing to the worship, nor is a part of it: so, some place may be for holy use, but is not therefore holy. Under the gospel, no difference is made of place at all. And without a divine designation, nothing can make any place relatively holy. The spiritual presence
of

of God does not do it ; for then every place were holy where a believer has communion with God. But some miraculous appearance of God, as to Moses in the bush, Exod. iii. 5. which did, *pro tempore*, make that place holy : and the abode of the visible symbols of his presence fixed by divine appointment to any place. But it is time to dismiss this point. See a learned, weighty, and not unaccurate discourse thereon, viz. Mr. Jenkin's afternoon sermon, preached August 17, 1662. printed in the collection of farewell sermons, preached about that time. To conclude, let us adore our Lord Jesus Christ as the true tabernacle, and see that our hearts be the living temples of the Holy Ghost, Isa. lvii. 15. Ephes. ii. 22. It matters not where this ordinance is celebrated, so we have the presence of our blessed Jesus with us.

LEV. ix. 6, 22, 23, 24.

“ And Moses said, This is the thing which the Lord commanded, that ye should do ; and the glory of the Lord shall appear unto you, v. 23.—And the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people, v. 24. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering, and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.”

THOUGH sacrificing was a solemn part of the worship commanded at mount Sinai, yet it was much more ancient, as we have seen

seen in the practice of godly Noah presently after the flood, and of righteous Abel long before that ; which shews, that it was an institution from the beginning. So was Christ the lamb slain (in type as well as in promise) from the foundation of the world. But now, offering of sacrifice being designed by God to be one of the most solemn ordinances of his worship, till Christ, the great sacrifice, should be offered up, he ordained a priesthood to serve continually at the altar. This was the work of Aaron and his sons. Their consecration unto this office we had chap. viii. and their entrance upon the discharge of it in this chapter, which God would honour by a display of his own glory. This they must prepare for, according to divine direction, v. 6, 7. Though the displays of God's glory are sovereign and free, yet they are ordinarily vouchsafed to his people waiting on him in a way of duty. They that have skill will read this in those New Testament Scriptures, John xiv. 23. chap. xv. 16. Great enjoyments of God are experienced in a way of close walking with God, and keeping his commandments.

Here was a solemn worshipping of God in this chapter, both by a sin-offering, and burnt-offering, both for Aaron, and for the people, v. 8. and 18. These things they were to do, and had the promise of seeing the glory of God. Out of this chapter we might state, and very much settle our disputes about those things that are called conditions of the covenant. Do you be found in the way of duty, do so and so, saith God ; " for to-day the Lord will appear unto you."

you." That's his purpose, and that he promiseth, and it is proposed in a way of encouragement. Well, but "this is the thing that ye shall do, and the glory of the Lord shall appear unto you," v. 6. Here it is proposed as it were in a conditional way. In this way you may expect it, and cannot, and shall not, have it in another. On this ground many speak of duties as conditions. But you see it was first proposed and promised freely; and the duty required was, if any, *conditio conditionati*, a condition promised by God, or undertaken for by him. So what is required becomes a part of the covenant, and therefore cannot properly be a condition of it. Let conditions then veil to free promise, and free grace, in which they are all swallowed up. And let us not too eagerly strive about words, but see if we can agree about things.

Well! These duties they waited upon God in: and what then did Israel wait upon God for at the conclusion of this solemnity? 1. The blessing of Moses the mediator, and of Aaron the high-priest. For the office of the priest was not only to offer sacrifice for atonement, but also to bless the people. See 1 Chron. xxiii. 13.— "And to bless in his name for ever." The form of blessing used by the priest was excellent. You have it in Numb. vi. 24.—27. 2. They waited for a visible manifestation of God's glory. 3. A visible token of his acceptance of their offering and worship. And all these they enjoyed. Hence they were filled with joy, and holy reverence. "They shouted, and fell on their faces."

What wait we for this evening, in this way of duty that God calleth for? We have to do with

Christ,

Christ, our mediator, our high-priest. We are to converse with him in his glorious and eternal priesthood, Christ the priest, and Christ the sacrifice. This ordinance of the Lord's Supper comes the nearest to those solemnities of any other. Though 'tis not a sacrifice, yet 'tis a feast upon a sacrifice. And now what wait we for? Oh! how desirable is a blessing from our priest, if he will lift up his hand, and bless us! And how much to be desired is a sight of the glory of God! Here his glory is to be seen, tho' not visibly as then; yet by an eye of faith. And O how should we desire some token for good of his presence! Tho' not by fire sent down from heaven, yet he can make us know that he is in this place, and doth accept our persons and services this evening. Lord! these are the things we seek at this great sacrifice! Bless us, own us, and shew us thy glory!

LEV. xvi.

Christ our atonement.

ONE great ordinance of the Old Testament was the making atonement for sin, in a very solemn manner, by the priest, even the high-priest alone, once a year, which is recorded very particularly in this chapter. Here,

I. Consider the garments which were to be used. Not those he ordinarily wore, and in which he ministered at other times, but the holy linen

linen garments, v. 4. Yet he was to change his garments, v. 13, 24. These linen garments typified the meanness of Christ's outward estate. He was in a humbled abased state while he was making atonement here on earth. Yet they typified cleanness, purity, and innocence, in his whole performance (Rev. xix. 8.) as also did the washing with water in putting them on. But when Christ had done the work, he put on other garments, robes for beauty and glory, after his resurrection.

II. Aaron must provide an offering for himself, first to atone for his own sins : which shews the weakness of that dispensation ; for Christ need not do thus, Heb. vii. 26, 27, 28. He could never atone for others sins, who must first atone for his own. The high priest must first be clear of his own sins, before he could atone for others, to show that Christ must be clear of all sin of his own, who was to atone for others sins. Thou, dearest Lord, who wert without sin, wert made sin, to put away my sin, by the sacrifice of thyself on that great atonement-day !

III. Aaron with his sin-offering must offer incense, and raise a cloud of incense to cover the mercy-seat. So did Christ carry a sweet perfume with him into heaven, the perfume of his sacrifice, the virtue of his blood ; and as with a cloud of incense he covers the mercy-seat above, and still perfumes the holy place with his intercession there. The papists say, why may not the saints in heaven, why may not the holy angels, be desired to pray for us ? We ask it of the saints here : and those above have an interest in God too. I answer, because it is an encroachment upon the

high-

high-priesthood of Christ above. No angel nor arch-angel dares speak a word ; it is Christ's prerogative to appear in heaven for us, Heb. ix. 24. The high-priest alone must enter into the holiest, and that once a year. Most excellently is this discoursed by Mr. Mede in his apostasy of the latter times, where he is shewing, that praying to saints glorified, as mediators and agents to us with God, is idolatry, p. 31—40. in 4to. he shews, ‘ This glorious throne of majesty, this ‘ sitting at the right-hand of God, is a name in-‘ communicable, an exaltation whereof no crea-‘ ture in heaven or earth is capable. The ho-‘ nour of being prayed to in heaven, and before ‘ the throne of presence, is a prerogative of *dex- tra Dei*, and to receive our devotions there, a ‘ flower of Christ's sitting at the right-hand of ‘ God.—Now in the tabernacle of this world, ‘ as was in the first tabernacle, we may happily ‘ find many priests whom to employ as agents ‘ for us with God: but in the second tabernacle, ‘ which is in heaven, there is but one agent to ‘ be employed, but one who hath royal commis-‘ sion to deal between God and men, that angel ‘ of his presence, as Isaiah calls him, chap. lxiii. ‘ 9. And this he shews, to be the fruit and re-‘ ward of his undergoing that death which no ‘ creature in heaven or in earth was able to un-‘ dergo but himself, whereby death itself was ‘ overcome,—that it might appear for ever to be ‘ a peculiar right to him. Nor is God to be ‘ prayed to in any other name than Christ's name. ‘ —As God is one, so the Mediator is one. It ‘ is a god-like royalty, and therefore can belong ‘ but

‘ but to one.’ Thus that great man. Nor do I remember to have read any thing better written than what he there writes at large upon this subject. O the glory of his intercession !

IV. Aaron must offer the goat of the sin-offering for the people, and bring the blood into the holy place, and make an atonement by blood for Israel. Thus Christ made an atonement by his own blood, for all the transgressions, and all the sins and uncleannesses of his Israel. Having offered himself, he carried the virtue of his own blood into heaven, and reconcil’d that holy place, that sinful men might have an inheritance there.

V. No man must be in the tabernacle when all this was done. There was none with Jesus Christ in the great work of making atonement. None with him in dying, to bear a part or to support him in the work. None at the altar of burnt-offering, or at the altar of incense, but himself, Isa. xli. 28. c. xl ix. 3. c. lix. 16. c. lxiii. 3. 5. He alone could go in and make an atonement in the holy place. O blessed Jesus ! To thee is the honour due of making our peace with God.

VI. There was a scape-goat, over which all the iniquities of Israel, with all their transgressions, in all their sins, were confess’d, and on which they were laid, and by which they were carried away into a land of separation. Thus Christ having died as the goat of the sin-offering, he rose again as our scape-goat, and went away alive, victorious over hell and death ; but when he arose, he left our sins in the grave, that land of separation never more to be seen or heard of, never more to be found or remembred. I say, Jesus Christ
rose

rose from the dead, but our sins did not rise with him, but remain'd buried for ever. Thus atonement was to be made on the tenth day of the seventh month every year at the end of the year (Exod. xxiii. 16.) " So Christ appear'd once (and but once) in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

O let us view the blood of atonement, and view the atonement made by that blood, and act faith in it at the Lord's table.

Thanks be to God for Christ, who is our peace.



L E V. xxv.

The jubilee.

TH E R E was a very great solemnity of the jubilee, or year of release, under the Old Testament. It was proclaimed and published in a very solemn manner; and that was by the sound of the trumpet, ' Hear all ye tribes of ' Israel from Dan to Beersheba ! The year of ' jubilee is come, at the end of seven sabbatical ' years ! Hear in all your cities, towns, and vil- ' lages, the trumpet sounding a joyful release !' Now it was the greatness of the antitype that kept up the greatness and majesty of the type. The preaching of the gospel, which is the joyful sound, was figured hereby. This the Psalmist means, Psal. lxxxix. 15. alluding (as is thought) to the year of jubilee. " Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound ;" the glad tydings that

that the gospel brings to their ears, concerning Christ the great Redeemer, and that blessed redemption wrought by him. The trumpet was to sound, and the jubilee begin on the day of atonement, v. 9. The time of the year answered the time of Christ's nativity or coming into the world, which I am very apt to think was in the seventh month, and not the tenth according to our vulgar reckoning; but at the time of the feast of the tabernacles, which was on the fifteenth day of this month, Lev. xxiii. 39. This feast (*viz.* of tabernacles) was a type of Christ's incarnation, or tabernacling in the flesh, John i. 14. But when his incarnation and his death were thus as it were conjoined in these types, it shews, that he was born to die. And as he could not die unless he were born: so if he were born for us, he must also die for us.

And when the jubilee was thus solemnly introduced by the day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles; it teaches that the great year of jubilee takes its rise both from the incarnation and passion of our Lord Jesus. O joyful birth! and O blessed death, that are the source and spring of so much good to men! Hear all ye tribes of Israel; in all the world! The year of jubilee is come, the feast of tabernacles, the day of atonement, the acceptable year of the Lord! Let the trumpet sound aloud to be heard in all the world, Isa. xxvii. 13. "The great trumpet shall be blown."

But what is the year of jubilee?

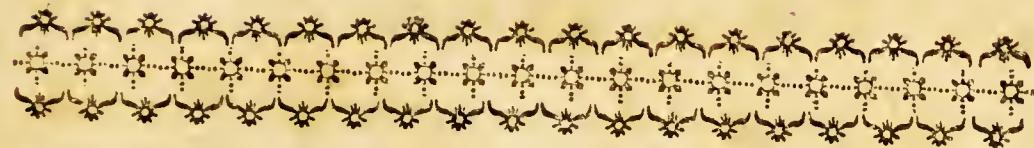
I. It was a year of redemption as to their inheritance that was sold or forfeited, v. 10.

II. It was a year of liberty and release to him who was sold thro' poverty, and to his family, and of returning to his possession, v. 41.

III. It was a year of rest to the land, and to the inhabitants of it. Like the paradisiac state, they were to live of what grew of itself, by the blessing of God, which was to be eaten out of the field, v. 11, 12.

To this happy year Isaiah alludes in that sweet and comfortable prophecy, Isa. lxi. 1—3.—“To preach good tidings to the meek,—to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, v. 2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, &c.” Which Christ himself applied to himself, Luke iv. 16—22.

The spiritual jubilee then is the glorious liberty, “wherewith Christ hath made us free,” the Lord’s release from the bondage and tyranny of sin as purchased by Christ, and effected by the spirit. It is the redemption of poor sinners, who had sold themselves to sin and satan. It is the purchase of the possession of grace and glory. It is the blessed rest we enter into by faith, and never go out from till its swallowed up in everlasting rest.



MEDITATIONS

Suited to the Occasion of
BREAKING BREAD.

PART II.

Containing brief Discourses on some Heads
of Divinity, concerning Jesus Christ our
Lord.

CHAP. I.

The glorious perfections of God displayed in Christ.

HERE let us come and consider how
H all the glorious perfections of God
are manifested and magnified in Jesus
Christ, and the redemption of poor
sinners by him. The being of God is written in
legible characters in every part of the creation,
and seen in the conservation and government of
this world: but would men have farther proof
of it? He sends his Son down from heaven to
earth, to assure us, not only "that he is, but
that

that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him ; that he was and is in Jesus Christ reconciling the world to himself." And he that will not believe this testimony of the Son of God, deserves to perish in his unbelief. But now let us view the perfections of the divine nature.

I. The wisdom of God. The constitution of the glorious person of the Redeemer, as God man, is the amazing effect of infinite divine wisdom. In him heaven and earth, God and man, do meet, and make one person. Offended and offending natures are united in sweetest concord, the pledge and way of our reconciliation with God. This is therefore reckoned as the great mystery of the gospel, 1 Tim. iii. 16. "God manifest in the flesh." But this point is admirably handled by Dr. Owen, in his discourse of the person of Christ ; to which I refer the reader.

And again, the salvation of the Church by Christ is a wonderful display of divine wisdom. Here mercy and justice are brought to a reconciliation, both their pleas are fully heard, and both shine forth in all their brightness. A surety stood in the place of sinners, obeyed and died in their stead, satisfied the offended justice of God, redeemed us by his blood, justified us by his righteousness : this is that new and living way, which only infinite wisdom could think of, or contrive. How many and deep are the mysteries of the gospel ! And in all of them the wisdom of God is made known in a surprising manner, Ephes. iii. 8—10.

II. The power of God. If we consider the works of creation, those works that men behold, there

There he appears in wonderful displays of power, “ his eternal power and Godhead,” Rom. i. 20. In all the parts of the creation, we see the glory, and Almighty arm, of the great Creator. But when we are about to speak of the joyful sound, we will say, “ Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right-hand, Psal. lxxxix. 13.

This power is seen in our redemption by Jesus Christ. “ For who can save with an arm like God ? ” Job xl. 9, 14. Isa. lxiii. 1. In forgiving sin. “ For who is a God like unto thee, that pardonest iniquity ? ” *Dcus fortis par tibi*; J. and T. In regeneration and conversion, according to the power that raised up Christ from the dead, Ephes. i. 19, 20. And in raising up the saints at the last day. Finally, in a new creation. For, “ behold, he maketh all things new,” Rev. xxi. 5. Thus to restore what sin had ruined; to repair what was marred by the fall; to overcome himself, the resentments of his justice; and to bring good out of evil: these are works worthy of himself; in these he acts like God, and shews the exceeding greatness of his power.

III. The holiness of God. He is an holy God: but the image of his holiness could only be impressed on reasonable creatures. Wherefore that could not be learned by, nor seen in any of the creatures throughout this lower creation, but in man only. And when man had sinned, what representation can be made of his holiness, by any creature bearing his image in this lower world? In Jesus Christ we see it, in his personal holiness; and in saving poor fallen man unto ho-

E holiness,

holiness, and in a holy way. 'Tis true, he appears a holy God in punishing sinners, and might have done so in the destruction of all the world, when all had sinned. But he would be known to be such in saving of sinners: now this could not be in absolute pardon and forgiveness; but in forgiving so, that his hatred might appear against sin, and indignation against all unrighteousness; and that the holiness of the law might be exemplified in a perfect obedience; and the image of God in holiness restored to those who are saved. Now all these are so wonderfully accomplished in the Lord Jesus Christ, that we go forth and behold the infinite holiness of God in brighter characters and colours, than 'twas displayed in the first creation, or could have been in the eternal perdition of all who sinned.

IV. The justice of God. As the purity of his nature, so his infinite justice with respect to his law, shines forth in Christ. Vindicative justice in the suffering of Christ. Remunerative justice in rewarding his obedience, with the salvation of all the elect. 'Tis true, he might have glorified his justice in the everlasting punishment of all the offenders. But as there is a manifold wisdom of God, so there is an admirable and pleasing variety in his works, wherein he displays himself and his perfections. Nor doth his justice so fully and clearly shine forth in the sufferings of the damned, who are eternal victims thereunto, as in the sufferings of his innocent, beloved and only-begotten Son. "Him hath God set forth to be a propitiation"—to shew his justice (as it may be rendered) Rom. iii. 25, 26.
Which

Which text Luther was so terrified with, in the time of his soul-conflicts, pitching on those words, To shew his justice, that three days and three nights together he lay upon his bed, without meat, drink, or any sleep (as some write) thinking Christ to be sent to no other end but to shew forth God's justice as an executor of the law: till at length being satisfied by the Lord of the true meaning, *viz.* that the justice of God was executed upon his Son, to save us from the stroke thereof; he immediately thereupon started up from his bed, so confirmed in faith, that nothing afterwards could appall him. Preface to his commentary on the Galatians, English. O what a light of the gospel was let into his soul with this one truth! God shewed forth his justice in the sufferings of Christ, that he might be just, and a justifier. Here he is a just God and a Saviour. If he would be a just God, how shall he be a Saviour? If he would be a Saviour, how shall he be a just God? These are sweetly reconciled in Christ.

V. The goodness of God. This is displayed in all the forms of love, mercy, and grace.
1. Love. It was love chose a number in Christ before the world was. Free, self-moving, eternal love, that had no motive out of himself. Love ordained Christ as an head, above the fall; and gave him to be a Saviour of the body upon the view of the fall. Here that of the Apostle is displayed, "God is love:" which speaks something so great, so bright, so surprizing, that no comment or exposition can ever reach. In himself he is love, and in his Son this shines forth.

“God is love.” It is a theme worthy of the discourse of angels and glorified spirits above, and the subject of their eternal songs. 2. Mercy. Mercy is love and goodness in a peculiar manner of exercise, *viz.* in a way of pity, compassion and kindness to the miserable. Poor sinners lay weltering in their blood and bleeding to death, in a perishing, dying, damning condition: and God was pleased to look with an eye of pity upon a remnant of them, and to provide a Saviour. Those who find themselves raised from the ruins of the fall, from a deplorable and miserable state of sin and spiritual death, and from going down to the pit, will cry out, Mercy, mercy! “God who is rich in mercy, for his great love—hath quickened us,” Ephes. ii. Infinite love set this mercy at work. 3. Grace. This is the highest exaltation of love and goodness. Mercy looks upon the miserable; but grace overcomes all unworthiness and ill desert. However wretched and sinful, rebellious and obstinate, the sinner hath been, it is resolved to save him, and doth save him, with a right-hand, Rom. v. 15. “The grace of God, and gift by grace, by one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many,” v. 17. “They who receive abundance of grace,” he means the grace of God to us-ward, they who have experienced the abundant goings forth and fruits of his grace, shall reign in life, &c. Also v. 20, 21. Now this love; mercy, and grace, is the love, mercy, and grace of three in one, which also endears it. The fountain of it is in God, but the streams flow through Jesus Christ.

VI. The truth of God. How is this magnified and manifested in the Lord Jesus! The truth of

of the precept, which says, thou shalt obey, and do this and the other, for life and happiness ; and thou shalt not do so and so. Where is the truth of God, if sinners are saved without the fulfilment of this law of God in all the precepts of it ? If any abatement is made, that doth not secure his truth, but infringes it. How came men then to make bold with the truth of God, and talk of his condescending to our sinful weakness by a milder law ? But in the perfect active obedience of Christ this is secured. Again, the truth of the threatening, “ Dying, thou shalt die : ” which had not been secured, if man had been saved of absolute mercy and forgiveness. But it took place in Christ, in that blessed exchange between him and us. Lastly, The truth of the promises, both in the covenant of works, and of grace, is displayed in our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. xv. 8. So that now, when God’s people are no longer called by the name of Abraham, or Jews from Judah ; but by a new name, *viz.* Christians from Christ ; we adore and praise the God of truth, we bless ourselves in the God of truth, and swear (that is, perform all our worship) to and by the God of truth, Isa. lxv. 16. Heb. In God Amen, and by God Amen, him who is the Amen, “ the true and faithful witness,” Rev. iii. 14. In whom all the promises of God are not only Yea, but Amen, that is, are secured, and faithfully and eternally fulfilled.

Now, not only these attributes, as considered singly and apart, but in mutual aspects upon each other, in wonderful harmony, and surprizing

agreement, do shine forth in an obeying, dying Jesus, Psal. lxxxv. 10, 11. and Psal. lxxxix. 14. These things are not only fit, but ought to be the subject of our meditation, when we come to the Lord's table.



C H A P. II.

The ends of this ordinance.

Consider we in the next place, what are the ends of this institution and ordinance of Christ. And I wish that all believers would acquaint themselves with these. How shall we aright celebrate any ordinance, if we don't consider the ends of the institution? They are therefore these that follow:

I. To keep up a memorial in the world, and in our hearts, of the sufferings and death of Christ. Such an event, so great in itself, in its causes, ends, and effects, as is never to be forgotten. This is held forth in those words [in remembrance of me.] A remembrance ought to be kept up in the world, which is done in such a solemnity before all that see or hear it. "Ye shew forth the Lord's death." And also in our hearts, which we should stir up to a remembrance of Christ. He remembered us in his first coming. And will remember us "when he comes in his kingdom." And shall we not have an effecting remembrance of him? His sufferings were for us. O! let us keep up the memorial of them.

II. To

II. To be a pledge of the love of Christ, and a confirmation of our interest in the new covenant, and the blessings of it. Love shone in every action of Christ's life: and in his passion, in that cursed death he died. His love is also seen in this very ordinance, which therefore ought to be taken as a pledge of his love. Its also a seal of the covenant. This blood is "the blood of the New Testament, and was shed for the remission of sins." We are to eye the remission of sins purchased by the blood of Christ, given in the new covenant, sealed as well as signified in this ordinance. And Christ would have us take it home to ourselves. Broken for you, shed for you, and also for many: for many now in heaven; and for many other believers in other places, as well as for you who are here; and for many souls yet to be converted in the virtue of that blood.

III. To convey Christ in the soul, and exhibit the blessings signified, as a blessed means or instrument for that end; and not an empty sign. "Take, eat, drink, &c." Take Christ and all. Eat the bread, and eat the body of Christ. Drink the wine, and drink the blood of Christ. Don't take up short of this. All its efficacy indeed it has from the institution of Christ. It would be useless and unprofitable, if it were not of his appointment. Nor has it by his institution any physical efficiency, nor is it a proper cause of grace. The Scripture ascribes no effective force to the sacraments, distinct from efficacious ob-signation or sealing. All its efficacy is moral, as the famous Witsius has accurately dis-

puted and cleared, *Miscel. Sacr. tom. alt. Exercit.* 19. *De Efficacia & Utilitate Baptismi, &c.* But when the Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Christ's appointment, together with the signs he doth give the things signified, in the believing use of this ordinance ; and the believer in the use of it has communion with Christ himself, who gives himself to be received by faith in the Lord's Supper, as a means of his own appointment.

IV. To stir up and draw out grace into exercise. To give a fresh occasion to the exercise of repentance, and godly sorrow, upon the sight of the sinfulness of sin, the justice of God, his hatred of sin in the sufferings of Christ. To draw out faith on Christ, while that glorious object is set before us, in his abasement and death. And that by faith we might derive strength from Christ for the mortifying and subduing of sin ; that so we might be in the likeness of his death, and conformed to a crucified Jesus. To excite some suitable actings of love to Christ under the representations and discoveries of Christ's love, that thus it might be a feast of love, and a feast of joy, a feast of fat things to a poor believer. For while there are outgoings from Christ to the soul, and goings forth of the soul to him, Christ doth sup with us, and we with him.

V. To be a bond of the communion of saints here, and representation and pledge of the same hereafter. We are all one bread, one body, and drink into one spirit. It is for many, and therefore must be in a society. They have all communion with one Lord Redeemer, by one Lord the Spirit, and communion with one another in this

this ordinance. They also sit down as those who are to sit together in his kingdom. There will be many to drink it new with him at his second coming. You see how Christ gives to all his disciples, to every one a portion. And for them he prepares the marriage-supper of the lamb. O what feast will be then !

VI. To gather in our wandering hearts from sin and the world, and engage them afresh for Christ. How apt are ye to wander ! But O the engagements that are upon us from time to time ever to admire, ever to praise, ever to love our Lord Jesus ! But of these more particularly, and at large.



C H A P. III.

Of the sufferings of Christ.

I. **I**T is to keep up a memorial of Christ's sufferings and death. It must, it shall, and will be remembered till time shall be no more. 'Tis about 1728 years ago since he died upon the cross ; but still his death ought to be as precious as ever ! 'Tis as much needed as ever ; and is as full of efficacy and power as ever. It is the same to God the Father, of as sweet a savour, and ought to be as precious to all that believe. In the virtue thereof are we the called of God ; and thereby do hope for salvation.

We are then to consider whose death it was ; what manner of death ; what made it necessary

for him to die ; whence it had its efficacy ; for whom he died ; and for what ; or what he obtained thereby.

Quest. 1. Whose death it was ? Ans. The Lord's death. So it is called, 1 Cor. xi. 26. "The Lord's death ;" that great and glorious Lord. O how affecting , and even over-whelming, a consideration is this ! Jesus the Son of God was he who died : not in the divine nature, for that could not suffer ; but in a natur ehe took on purpose, wherein he was like his brethren, and near allied to them. O gracious and merciful Lord ! thy grace and mercy moved thee to it. He died who was and is the Lord of all, the Lord of glory, the Lord of life. O wonderful, that he should die ! He died who is our Lord, John xx. 13. It was this affected Mary : "They have taken away my Lord." So let us say, they have crucified my Lord. And shall we not mourn for him ?

Quest. 2. What manner of death was his ?

Ans. 1. A cursed death. It was under the curse of the law he died ; of which his dying on the cross was the outward sign and token. For it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." It was so written on purpose, fore-seeing that Christ should die that very death. He bore the real curse, yea, was made a curse ; which is the deepest and most forcible expression that could be used. Was there no death that Jesus could die, but that death which the law of God had put such a brand of infamy upon ? He felt the weight of sin, and felt the weight of wrath. This made him complain of the suffer-
ings

ings of his soul : “ My soul is exceeding sorrowful.”

2. A painful death. To hang stretched and distorted in every joint, nailed by the hands and feet upon the cross, life expiring by slow degrees ; this must needs be a very painful death, and the more so because it was a lingering death. Yet it must be owned, that many of the martyrs for Christ have undergone deaths perhaps more painful, and afflictive to the body, if that only be considered : and when they have done so with greatest cheerfulness and courage, yea with joy and triumph ; this shews there was some unseen source and spring of sorrow to our Lord Jesus, grief more pungent than all this ; and that was the wrath of God, let into his soul ; or else you must suppose the Son of God weaker, and more subject to fear and complaint, than poor weak men. And this argument, to me, amounts to demonstration, that there was an inexpressible load of grief upon Jesus Christ, besides what was from visible agents and causes.

3. A shameful death. For a man to suffer as a criminal, though he be not so, brings disgrace. That’s the man that was whipt ; that’s he that held up his hand at the bar, for a murderer, a blasphemer, &c. so Christ suffered as a malefactor, died between two thieves. What could be more disgraceful and shameful ? This accusation lay upon him, and Christ bore it, and let them revile, and rail, and blaspheme, “ committing himself (or his cause) to him that judgeth righteously.” Nor is this wholly cleared to this day ; for still the Jews and Turks revile him as he that

was hanged, a crucified God, who shall give an account to him at the day of judgment. But

O the patience ! O the grace of Jesus Christ !

Quest. 3. What made it necessary that he should die ?

Anf. 1. The purpose of God. So were his eternal councils, Eph. i. 9. chap. iii. 11. Isa. xlvi. 13. And it must needs be, that the purpose of the Father should stand. 2. The word of God, *viz.* his promises made from the beginning of the world. To which belong all the prophecies and types of the Old Testament : for the truth of God was concerned in them, even as in the promises, Gen. iii. 15. chap. xii. 3. Acts xiii. 32, 33. The Scripture must needs be fulfilled. The necessity is oft put upon that, that so it was written, Luke xxiv. 46. Mat. xxvi. 54. Mark xiv. 49. (3.) The promise of Christ, for so he had engaged to the Father. He had stricken the hands of suretyship, and could not go back, Psal. xliv. 6, 7.

Now the purpose and promise of God rested on these grounds : (1.) The glory of God. Christ must die, that God might be glorified. This is his end in all his works, and therefore surely in the highest and greatest of them. (2.) The salvation of poor sinners, which his heart was set upon. He might choose whether he would save sinners or no, but he chose to save them. And if he would save them, Jesus Christ must needs suffer. Sinners could not be saved unless Christ died ; and truly, I think, abstracting from the decree, the law, justice, holiness, and truth of God stood against it.

Quest.

Quest. 4. Whence the death of Christ had its efficacy?

Ans. (1.) From the dignity of his person. The Son of God, the only begotten Son, who is God and man in one person. "Who through the eternal spirit offered himself," Heb. ix. 14. meaning his own divine nature. This was the altar that sanctified the gift. (2.) From the authority of his office, "Called of God," Heb. v. 4. "Chosen of God," 1 Pet. ii. 4. "Sent of God," John x. 36. Hence Dr. Davenant on Col. i. 14. gives that reason, 'That believers under the Old Testament had redemption in Christ's blood, because this sacrifice of Christ had its saving power not only from its exhibition, but from the eternal decree of God.' (3.) From the voluntariness of his obedience: "He offered himself." O this made it pleasing to the Father, John x. 17, 18. (4.) From the perfection of his sacrifice; without spot, else it could not have been accepted, Lev. xxii. 21, 25. (5.) From the exchange between him and us; unless he had been a surety standing in our stead, his death could not have at all availed for us. I might add, from the proportion between the threatening and the suffering of Christ; but I pass on.

Quest. 5. For whom Christ died?

Ans. Not for the fallen angels; though they needed a redeemer, he did not take their nature, nor become surety for them, Heb. ii. 16. but for sinners of the sons of men. This is the meaning of that philanthropy, or love to men, mentioned Tit. iii. 5. It is not to fallen angels, but to the nature of man: yet, not for all of them,

but

but for a number chosen before of God, who are called “God’s elect, his chosen,” Isa. xliii. 20. “his redeemed,” Isa. lxiii. 4. “The ransomed of the Lord,” Isa. li. 10, 11. “Redeemed from among men,” Rev. xiv. 4. But what was their state and condition? I answer, they lay in the fall, in all the misery and ruin of a fallen state; that is certain, when Christ died for them. But were they so considered, or considered as believing and obedient ones? I answer, They were considered as wicked and ungodly believers and enemies, Rom. v. 6, 8. Even the saints then in heaven, as the object of redemption, were so considered. It is frequently said, “Christ died for all true believers.” You may also say, he died for all the saints in heaven: and there were many there when he died; but he died for none of them as glorified, but as fallen. So believers, as such, were not the objects of redemption. Christ died for no man as a believer or penitent, but as an ungodly sinner, and to make him a believer and penitent.

Now consider, are we ransomed ones? Are we the redeemed of the Lord? Then we may say, who loved me, and gave himself for me. O how should we be before the Lord with joy and praise this evening!

Quest. 6. For what Christ died? or what he obtained by his death?

Ans. As he obtained a people to his praise, to be unto him a name of joy, a praise, and an honour, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that he doth unto them: so he obtained for them an inheritance of highest privileges, dignities, and enjoyments, both here and

and hereafter : an inheritance of grace in this, and an inheritance of glory in another world. He would have his ransomed ones to be happy, and enjoy their inheritance, as his dear purchase. It is “ he hath made them kings and priests to God,” Rev. i. 6. The heavenly inheritance is the purchase of Jesus Christ, Eph. i. 14. This puts a value, and a sweetness, upon every blessing which we receive : it is the price of blood. Faith is so, and heaven itself is so ; and O how precious on that account !

C H A P. IV.

II. **T**HE second end of the Lord’s Supper is, to be a pledge of the love of Christ ; and a confirmation of our interest in it, and in the new covenant.

1. To be a pledge of the love of Christ. The heart of Christ was full of love, and he sought ways to express it : for love seeks a vent and way to express and make known itself. No doubt the disciples, who had seen the power of Christ so often, wondered to see him so weak, as he seemed to be at that time. Nay, perhaps (as some have thought) Judas might think, that when he had betrayed him, his enemies could not hold him, Mat. xxvii. 3. And it is probable his enemies might think of some greater struggle, which made them insult him so, v. 40, 42. Friends, or enemies, they were little aware what were

were the cords that held him, that bound him to the horns of the altar, Psal. cxviii. 27. that made this mighty Samson so weak in their hands, while yet he was so strong as to overcome in dying. The cords (I say) unseen, that bound him so, were his own love and our sins. So strong were these cords, that one of them, even our sins, were able to have bound us hand and foot for outer and eternal darkness ; but one of these cords could not bind him without the other. These twisted cords therefore fastened him to the cross with infinitely more strength, than the nails that pierced his blessed hands and feet. What shall be done with Jesus ? Ay, what indeed ? Shall he be received ? or shall he be rejected ? Doth this admit of a debate ? They cry out, crucify him, and, with united and repeated voices, crucify him. Why, what evil hath he done ? That indeed is worth asking : what had the innocent Jesus done ? Whose ox, or whose ass, hath he taken away ? Or, because he has shewn so much kindness to men (ever going up and down doing good) must he be thus requited ? What evil ! Its true, he did none : but I have done evil ; and thou, O believer, and my sins, I trust, were set to his account. Yet those iron chains of our sins could not have fastened on him, nor have held him, unless they have been made fast by the filken cords of love, his own dear love to poor sinners. O the greatness of his love ! Love could restrain Almighty power, and hold him to the tree. We cannot make a due estimate of his love, unless we consider, who it is that loved us ; who they are on whom he set his

his love ; in what manner he expressed it ; what are the properties ; and lastly, what are the fruits and effects of it. But all these would open too large a field of discourse. The Lord assist your and my meditation on them unto sweet refreshment. Only let me add a few words : it was the Son of God who was the lover, and sinful men who were the objects loved. And it was by dying he expressed his love. ‘ For he came to lay down his life even for his enemies, and (like the kind balsam-tree, whose healing wounds weep sovereign balm to cure those that made them) he refused not to die for those that killed him, and shed his blood for some of those that spilt it.’ Boyle’s Seraphic Love, p. 74. And in the words of another excellent author : ‘ We see him on the cross, hanging on the soreness of his hands and feet ; we see him pierced to the heart by a ruffian soldier ; we see him crowned with thorns, and the precious blood trickling from the head, to meet those other rivers that were running from his side and feet : we see him forsaken of his disciples ; and, what is more, we hear him complaining of being forsaken of God too. O blessed Saviour ! what eyes can refrain from weeping ? What heart from bleeding ? Is this the entertainment that the world gives to thee, the dearest pledge that God hath, or can send ? — Shall we mock and scourge, crucify, pierce and murder thee ? and wilt thou, by all these outrages committed against thyself, accomplish our salvation ? O victorious love ! that can pardon when abused, and exalt us by being abased,

‘ abased, glorify us by being despised !’ Bishop Hopkins’s sermon on the nativity of Christ. Where also he excellently discourses the loath-someness and deformity, frowardness and rebellion, of those on whom this love is pitched ; and how the attributes of God are glorified, and do shine forth, in an incarnate and dying Jesus ; which I had not seen till I had finished my meditations on that subject in a preceding chapter.

But how is this ordinance a pledge of the love of Christ ? I answer, Christ has made it so by his institution, and makes it so by his Spirit, when he seals his love to the souls of his people therein. By his institution, it has a respect to the greatest expression of love that ever was. Nothing without his institution could be a pledge or token of his love. Should men return to the passover, and say, a lamb would do better than a morsel of bread, it would be no expression of Christ’s love, because not of his appointment. But now when he instituted this to remember his love by, to express, in a figure, his dying love, and that the very night in which he was betrayed, for the good and comfort, solace and refreshment, of his people ; it must needs be, in the nature of the ordinance, and in the intention of Christ, a token of his love. Here (saith he) here is a pledge and a taste of my love, till I come again. Moreover, by his Spirit he manifests his love to his people in this ordinance. As love is that which is read in every part of it, so love is that which is manifested sometimes in a special, though secret, invisible way, to the souls of his people therein. For thy sake I died

(faith)

faith Christ;) and for thy sake appointed this ordinance on that remarkable night. Died to be meat for faith! appointed this solemnity, making myself nigh to thy faith to be fed upon. ‘But, O Lord, we can neither keep silence, nor yet speak out thy love, it is so great, so infinite!’ Oh! what a sweet repast, when Christ, the bread of life, is present, and his love is the generous wine going down sweetly, even the spiced wine of the juice of his pomgranate! So let me feast, O Lord, at thy table! Thy love is better than wine: love is all in this ordinance. Blessed be the Lord Jesus for his love-tokens! But O what love shall we return!

2. This ordinance is for the confirmation of our interest in the new covenant, or New Testament. And even herein it is an expression of Christ’s love, in that he would have us know, that he hath loved us. For when the love of Christ is represented and manifested, this is a mighty confirmation to faith; and faith is not confirmed without this. The new covenant is sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ: so the “first testament was dedicated by blood,” Heb. ix. 18. but the New Testament with better blood. The covenant of the Father, wherein all spiritual blessings are promised and given, is become the testament of the Son, confirmed by his death. This is a point of lofty consideration, that all the blessings of the Father’s everlasting covenant are the legacies of Christ’s last testament. Christ has made a will in favour of his people, and it is of force by the testator’s death, Heb. ix. 16. And such a relation hath this ordinance to the

new

new covenant, that Christ saith, “ This cup is the New Testament in my blood ; ” or, is my blood, that is, signifies my blood of the New Testament. The great thing, as to this, is, am I in that covenant and testament of Christ ? What is it to them that have no part in it ? The blessings of it are great and glorious ; but are they mine ? Let us endeavour to come with the faith of it, and to see it confirmed to us at the Lord’s table. That the covenant is a testament, that the testator has died, that his testament is of force, and has been ratified by his blood, are signified in this ordinance ; and the blessings of it confirmed to faith, particularly the remission of sins.

Here is a confirmation, that the Son of God is come ; that Christ died indeed ; that he suffered and bled. Though the time is long since, yet the thing is not forgotten, nor ever shall, O Lord ! so long as thy people have a thinking faculty ; nor cease to be spoken of, so long as they have a tongue to speak. The great doctrines and articles of faith are confirmed in this ordinance, which our Lord has left on purpose to be such a confirmation. How happy will it be may we see one by one, and say, He died for me ! May this be confirmed and sealed ! We will rejoice with unspeakable joy, as on the borders of glory.

C H A P. V.

Of the conveyance of Christ, and his benefits, into the soul; and drawing forth of grace into exercise.

III. **A**Nother end of this ordinance, is, the conveyance of Christ to the soul, and exhibiting the benefits of the new covenant. O take heed of sticking in the bare ordinance, in the elements of bread and wine. ‘ We are to consider the elements till we have got hold of Christ ; then we are to let go the signs, and embrace him that is signified. They are only useful to assist our faith, by virtue of God’s institution, in beholding and embracing the objects of faith.’ So Dr. Goodwin. Take heed of imagining I know not what sort of virtue in the ordinance, or in him that administers it. It is a great thing that it signifies and represents the Lord Jesus Christ, with whom therefore faith converses therein. Nor do we deny, that Christ is given really and truly, though spiritually and mystically (not corporally) to the true believer in the Lord’s Supper : that when he receives the signs, he receives him that is signified : and by the blessing of Christ, and working of the Spirit, it seals up to the believer his interest in the New Testament, and the blessings thereof, whether he feels it sensibly or no. Christ and his benefits are given and received in this ordinance. How should this make us long and thirst after it !

Eating includes receiving, and receiving Christ carries in it a reception of his benefits. So that there

there is a giving and receiving. And as the word of God is a means and instrument of our participation of Christ; so is this ordinance made to be; even of a dying crucified Jesus, and of the benefits of his death. Our Lord not only said, this is my body which is broken, but given for you: so that here is signified the body of Christ as broken and given not only for us, but to us. Nor is there barely the sign of it, but the very thing itself, even the giving of the body of Christ, for food to faith. Here then is work for faith, that Christ is given by the Father, and by himself, unto us in this ordinance. Moreover, "This is my blood (saith he) shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins."

The remission of sins then is one of the blessings sealed and applied in this ordinance. O let our thoughts enlarge here! Sins, in the plural! How many are they? They are beyond number. The sins he bore are so, Psal. xl. 12. where the Psalmist is speaking in the person of Christ. Thy sins and mine are so; and great as well as many; but Christ saith sins without exception, meaning all the sins of his elect. The remission of sins is founded in the expiation of them, or atonement made for them. The remission of sins means the blotting of them out, and remembring them no more. Here's the efficacy and perfection of this great sacrifice. Receive we then the remission of sins this day: and what blessing shall or can be wanting? Heb. viii. 10—12.

IV. Another end of this ordinance is, to stir up and draw out grace into exercise. For this blessed

blessed end hath our Lord appointed it. God by his regenerating spirit hath inlaid his people with the principles and habits of grace, which are the powers and faculties of the new creature, or the several members thereof. In the exercise of these consists the whole exercise of spiritual life, and thereon depends the growth and increase of spiritual life. Now although God could keep up holy frames of heart, in the exercise of grace, more immediately by himself; yet has he appointed ordinances for that purpose, whereby our communion with God in Christ is upheld: and among the ordinances of the gospel this is one of the most eminent. And that it is appointed for such an end appears,

1. In that it is the communion of the body of Christ, and of the blood of Christ, 1 Cor. x. 16. Not only to signify it, but also for the enjoyment and experience of it. That when we eat that bread, and drink that cup, we might have a real communion with Jesus Christ. So that our communion with Christ is greatly promoted hereby. Now then, when our whole actual sensible communion with Christ is enjoyed in and by the exercise of grace, this ordinance must needs have an influence thereinto, or else it can have none into our communion with Christ. And if it hath such an influence, it is by the appointment of Christ. It cannot be useful thereunto, unless he hath appointed it for that end.

2. From the qualification of the persons required to partake of this ordinance. They are gracious persons only, who, according to Christ's appointment, ought to partake therein, 1 Cor.

xi. 28. And why such who have grace? but because the exercise of grace is required. And why are others forbidden? Because they cannot exercise grace, who have no grace.

3. From the nature of that remembrance of the Lord's death, which is called for in this ordinance, it is not a bare historical remembrance, which a carnal man may have; but a spiritual believing remembrance; a tender affectionate remembrance. Christ could call for no less, and we could not put him off without this. Now the exercise of grace is required to such a remembrance, and is felt therein.

4. From that discerning of the Lord's body, which is also required, 1 Cor. xi. 29. It is possible for persons to eat and drink the bread and wine, and not discern the Lord's body. The Corinthians could not be without some knowledge of the occasion and end of its institution; but there was a farther believing, discerning the Lord's body, which is called for, than just a discerning it from common bread. Now that discerning supposes the exercise of grace, or indeed consists therein.

5. In the Lord's Supper Christ has appointed visible signs, that speak to our senses, and present the objects that our graces should act upon. And why doth Christ use signs, but to assist our weak faith? We should impeach his wisdom in the institution, if we should deny, that it was appointed to stir up and draw forth grace into exercise: for the other ends would be rendered frustrate without this. It was therefore a great instance of the grace and goodness of the Lord Jesus, seeing how apt

apt we would be to wander, how oft our frames would be like that of the disciples, in the night of his agonies, drowsy, sleepy, and declining, to recal us to the exercise of grace by this ordinance.

6. From the experience of believers. I hope we have gone away from this table, from this duty, revived, refreshed, comforted, and strengthened : that as clearly as the word of truth has been used in the hand of the Spirit, for the working of grace, this ordinance has been, and is used for stirring up and drawing forth the exercise of grace. It is true, the word doth not, cannot, work grace, but by the Spirit working in it : nor doth, nor can, this ordinance enliven and draw forth grace into exercise, save by the operation of the same Spirit. But this is no prejudice to what has been pleaded.

The graces to be exercised may be gathered from those considerations already urged, that prove the necessity of it. They are faith, love, repentance, humility, joy, hope, and the like. Such graces of the Spirit are to be in exercise. And it is easy to shew, that what exercise of grace is necessary to a right performance, the ordinance has an aptitude and suitedness in the nature of it to draw it forth ; I mean, thro' the Holy Ghost working therein. Study, O my soul ! the exercise of grace, in giving and receiving ; and “ let my beloved come into his garden, and take his pleasant fruits.”

C H A P. VI.

Of the communion of saints, and calling in of the heart from the world.

V. **A**Nother end of this institution is, to be a bond of the communion of saints here, and a pledge of it hereafter. Believers have communion with Christ their head, and they have communion with one another, as children of the same father, as members of the same body. This ordinance puts them in mind how near they are, and ought to be, to each other. They belong to the same family, and come into their father's house, and sit around his table. They must therefore lay aside all their resentments and anger, all malice, and all guile, &c. 1 Pet. ii. 1. and agree in one. This ordinance puts them in mind, that they are all redeemed with the same price of the precious blood of Christ ; and that he has a portion for all, and every one of them ; also, how God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us and our brethren, and therefore we must forgive one another. Here not only our covenant with Christ, but with each other, is renewed from time to time : and here we do as Jacob and Laban, eat and drink in token of mutual friendship. O how firm should our communion be, which is confirmed with such a bond ? Do we not see our own and each other's sins done away in the blood of the Lamb ? Why should we seek then for that which cannot be found ? and watch for each other's faults ? Do we not all eat the same bread, and drink the same cup of the Lord ? O happy twelve ! when Christ and

and his disciples sat at the same board ; for Judas lost his part. He sold his Saviour for thirty pieces of silver : a dismal exchange ! Here let us see how we are one, and all believers are one in Christ ; they are all invited to the same table.

And O what a pledge is here of an eternal feast in another world ? How sweet is the consideration ! We are but pilgrims here, and our continuance short in this lower world. Christ spreads a table to feed us by the way. O what a mercy is this ! But (saith he) remember that you are not to dwell here : be this feast a token, an earnest, of that above : be this bread, and this wine, the symbol of heavenly dainties ; the pledge of that new wine in my Father's kingdom ; wine of everlasting joy. Be this your fitting about this table an earnest of sitting down in the New Jerusalem ; of sitting down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And be the sweet communion, here enjoyed, a pledge of that never-failing communion in the general assembly, when all the assemblies and all the churches of the saints, shall be gathered together, and their Saviour with them. O then the mysteries of dying love shall be opened : then we shall look into them, understand, and admire them. Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, what that feast of love will be. That holy communion will admit of no hypocrite, none without a wedding-garment : for no unclean thing shall enter. How careful therefore should we be, to get rid of sin, and to be found meet for that inheritance, for that high and holy communion above ? For that end is this ordinance, that while

we here see the evil of sin, believe for the pardon of it, and mourn over our crucified Lord, we might die unto sin, and be more conformed to our head, till arriving to a full conformity unto him, we might come to enjoy endless communion with him.

VI. The last end mentioned of this holy solemnity was, to gather in our wandering hearts from the world, and engage them for Christ. Our hearts are very apt to forget Christ, and his love: nothing more naturally slips away, where grace is not in exercise. Now while the heart is called back to the remembrance of Christ, it is gathered in from its wanderings. As we find the Lord's-day, in the return of it, of blessed use to recal our hearts from the world, which they had wandered after (it may be) the greatest part of the foregoing week: so we find the need of ordinances, and particularly of this ordinance, for that end. We are made to consider what we have seen and enjoyed of Christ, and how we have carried it towards him, since we were last at the Lord's table. And when we are humbled for our wanderings, it is some means of healing. O how have we wandered from mountain to hill! What a variety of objects have we conversed with! How have our thoughts, affections, and meditations, our desires and pursuits, gone after sinful or worldly objects! Let them be all dismissed. Come, and converse with thy Lord. Thou hadst almost been estranged from him in a month's time, in a week's time. Return unto thy rest, O my soul! Now when our hearts are raised up to higher and new enjoyments of Christ,

and

and led into communion with him in this ordinance, then are they called off from the world, and more fixed for Jesus Christ. We are almost lost perhaps in the world, and worldly cares ; we need soul-restoration : and our God makes use of his day, of his word, and his ordinances, for that blessed end.



C H A P. VII.

Containing certain briefer meditations, with less observation of method.

M E D I T A T I O N I.

ACcording to this time, it shall be said of Jacob, and of Israel, whathath God wrought ! Thus may our souls say this evening, what great things in choosing, redeeming, and calling grace ! O distinguishing grace ! What wonders of love and power do we here see ! All the works of God are wonders ; all his works are mysteries. But his love in our redemption, of all wonders, is the most wonderful ; of all mysteries, it is the most mysterious. The greatest work that God himself ever wrought, the greatest thing that ever was done in heaven, or on earth, is here represented to us : and how vast is this consideration ! Infinite wisdom was taken up in the eternal contrivance of it ; infinite goodness, and love, infinite power and might, displayed, in effecting and bringing about our salvation. What could God or Christ do more ? The Father could do

no greater thing, than give his Son : the Son could do no greater thing, than give himself, than give his life. For what could be done more ? May we not say, with reverence, that God and Christ have done to the utmost ? We cannot conceive any thing greater, that God himself could do, Numb. xxiii. 23.

M E D I T A T I O N II.

WE are about to hold a feast to Jehovah, where we are to consider, (1.) The master of it : the great God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as he who gives his Son : the Lord Jesus as giving himself, and instituting this ordinance. (2.) The matter of it : and truly the master and matter of it are the same. Jesus Christ is both. This is a mystery peculiar to this blessed feast. O heavenly dainties ! O sweet repast ! The flesh, the blood, of the Son of God ! more than angels food ! Psal. lxxviii. 25. ‘ Christ is not only given as a sacrifice upon the cross, but as a feast upon the table. In the one he was given to be offered ; in this he is given to be partaken of, with all the fruits of his death.—A feast of God is great, but a feast on God is greater. Under these signs that body is presented, which was conceived by the spirit, inhabited by the Godhead, bruised by the Father to be our food, as well as our propitiation : that blood which satisfied justice, washed away our guilt on the cross, and pleads for us above ; that blood which silenced the curse, pacified heaven, and purged earth, is given to us for refreshment.’ Charnock on the

Attrib.

Attrib. p. 636. (3.) We are to consider the guests at this table. And O how unsuitable and disproportional are they ! Poor worms of the earth, to feed on the dainties of heaven !

The Lord Jesus invites us to a feast of love ; for such is the feast we solemnize. Love hath done all. We read of love-feasts in the primitive days : but sure, if ever there was a feast of love, this is so. Love is the great thing that is set forth in it. Love prepared it : love appointed it. And when Christ is presented indeed, love is sweetly manifested ; ravishing and overcoming love.

We read of Joseph's brethren, when he brought them to his house, and made a feast for them, and entertained them so splendidly, in the same place with himself, setting a mess before every man, which came from before him, that "the men marvelled one at another," Gen. xlivi. 33. Think what kind of thoughts, what affections, wrought in them : whence (think they) is this kindness to strangers ? not knowing they were his brethren. Much rather, infinitely more may we marvel this day, that we are brought into the house of Jesus Christ, and made to sit at his table, and that we may enjoy his presence. We may well marvel at ourselves, and marvel at one another, and marvel at that which is done unto us ! What love and kindness is shewn us ! What privileges and dignities are conferred upon us ! And why unto us strangers and enemies ! Shall we be so honoured, who had sold him, betrayed him, crucified him by sin ? We might have expected other treatment : but he is our brother, our elder brother, as Joseph was by dignity and

birthright, 1 Chron. v. 2. But O ! if there be a Benjamin here, a favourite, a beloved disciple whom Christ will give a fivefold portion to, whom he will honour to lean in his bosom ; such a soul will admire, at a great rate, and love more than his brethren, because of singular manifestations of love vouchsafed to him.

MEDITATION III.

IT is a feast, and therefore a good day, a joyful time. We should therefore surely rejoice, and know “the joy of the Lord is our strength,” Deut. xvi. 11, 14, 15. Neh. viii. 9, 10. The cause of this joy is what God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, have done for us. Let us rejoice in the love of the Father and the Son. Let us rejoice, because our peace is made, and our sins are forgiven. Let us rejoice in the good that God hath bestowed, and the provision he hath made for us, Isa. xxxiii. 24. The nature of this joy recommends it to us. It is not carnal, but spiritual. It is joy in the Lord ; it is holy joy, joined with holy awe and reverence of him in whose presence we are, Psal. ii. 11. Nor does it exclude repentance, and godly sorrow, and gospel-mourning. Can we not rejoice, with tears in our eyes ? and mourn for joy of heart ? In 1 Kings viii. 66. there is a very suitable frame for this solemnity ; which if we cannot bring, we should labour to carry away with us from the Lord’s table. “ They went to their tents joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.” O let us go away joyful and glad of

of heart, for all this great goodness in Christ. Shall the saints of the Old Testament shame us, and their joy exceed the joy of the New Testament? How should we eat our meat with gladness every day, especially at this table!

MEDITATION IV.

MY Lord came with great and strong desires to celebrate his last passover, and solemnize this ordinance, Luke xxii. 15. "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer;" *q. d.* When I leave this world, I am willing to leave this token of my love with you; and that I might do so, how have I longed for this hour! O with what inexpressible desire am I with you in this place? Shall not we then desire to come, and desire to sit down with Christ, and desire to eat? O let us come with desire of meeting with Christ, desire of seeing his hands and his feet, desire of tasting his love, such love as none else could shew. And let us hear him express his desires, saying, with you I have desired to eat. He had singled out the persons whom he would thus honour and dignify. Let us hear him saying, I have desired thee and thee to sit this night at my table. What! am I singled out for this favour, and that by the strong desire of Jesus Christ? Lord! rouse my desire, that as thou art all desire, thou may be the object of mine, Cant. v. 16. Deut. xxviii. 6.

MEDITATION V.

WE should come to the Lord's table with holy reverence, not rudely, not rashly, not without previous prayer and meditation, when

we design it before-hand. There should be a reverential frame when we come. Let us be before him then at this time with reverence, and godly fear ; not the fear of slaves, but the reverence of children. It is on the Lord's-day we come ; the time is holy. It is the Lord's table we approach ; and the Lord's Supper we eat ; and the Lord's body, and the Lord's blood, that we have to do with. These symbols then are holy, and the work is holy. O then here's the nearest approach to God, and nearest communion with him, on this side heaven. They were to eat the passover as to the Lord, 2 Chron. xxx. 3—27. They were to be separated from filthiness, Ezra vi. 21, 22. And shall we think it is a light thing to come to the Lord's table, or that we should not be careful over the frames of our hearts ?

We should come in obedience, keeping the command in our eye, "This do in remembrance of me." How many things are well done for the matter of them, but they are not done in obedience ? Are we before the Lord in obedience this evening ?

We are not to expect always, nor perhaps often, ravishing joys and manifestations : if there be now and then a glimpse of that nature, it is a favour. But Lord ! thou hast commanded us to come, and we come in the sense of duty, whatever is the measure of comfort or joy thou art pleased to vouchsafe. Nor can we raise up our own hearts. We can only spread the sail (if we can do that,) and then wait for a gale.

In

In the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, we read, "God had prepared the people," 2 Chron. xxix. 36. then "Hezekiah proclaimed a passover," chap. xxx. Preparation in our hand lies like a dead weight. We are not able to move. O how heavily the work goes on ! but in the hand of the spirit how easy ! how speedy ! O how comfortably it proceedeth ! God, who prepared his people of old for the passover, can graciously prepare us for his supper.

M E D I T A T O N VI.

ONOW for the eye of faith to take a view of unseen things ! We solemnize this day the things that were done almost seventeen hundred years ago ; the things that were done at Golgotha, without the gates of Jerusalem ; to commemorate the deep poverty of our glorious Lord ; his agonies, his sighs and tears, his dying conflicts ; to view his pierced side, his pierced hands and feet ; to celebrate his victory over death, and all spiritual enemies. "Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth, and break forth into singing, O mountains ; for the Lord hath comforted his people," Isa. xlix. 13. Yea, be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, the Son of God was pleased to die for the sin of man. And albeit the time is long since these things were done, yet his blood is as fresh in heaven, as full of virtue and power, as ever. But it is faith that views these unseen things. Faith looks back these many hundred years, and sees the mighty load of sin lying on that blessed Jesus ; and the satisfaction made by his death. Here is the work of faith,

that same Jesus who was so humbled and abased, who died on mount Calvary, was the Son of God, and is the only redeemer of men. Dearest Lord ! My faith clings and cleaves about thee, desirous never to let go her hold, till lodged in thy bosom ; and still views and views thy glory, till, dazzled with the sight, she is lost in the open vision of thy face. And O for that triumphant faith, that views a particular interest, and faith, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me !" This Jesus is mine, and all he was, and all he did, and all he suffered, is mine. And let us come with enlarged expectations. If we have not ravishing joys, and great enlargements, yet let us believe, that Christ is present according to his promise, and will do great things for us. Let us believe that he gives us the remission of our sins, and is pleased to own us, tho' unworthy, in our waiting upon him. We are not to think we shall find ourselves free from sin, when we go away from hence. This enemy is the last but one that shall be destroyed. If the heart is more engaged, and more helped against it, here is cause of thankfulness. But let us believe that it shall die, and wither, and that at last it shall be conquered.

Again, when we come with any doubtings about our state, whether we have believed ; let us come with an earnest desire to believe, and to put forth some acts of faith on the Lord Jesus, that we may know that we have believed, and improve the ordinance this way, to get an assurance of faith. It is faith that is the great thing, faith is virtually and radically all, in this work and

and duty. If it be well with our faith, it is well with every grace. But if this is weak and languishing, so doth every grace beside.

MEDITATION VII.

THAT Christ so loved us as to give his life for us ; this is the quintessence, the glory, the excellency, and highest attainment of love. Love exceedingly delights in laying forth itself in acting, in doing, and suffering for its object. It loves to express itself, and strongly desires to be taken notice of by its object. It rejoiceth in greatest difficulties for the pleasure of being observed by the person beloved, to win a return of love. For love is not satisfied merely with loving ; but the thing it aims at is, to be loved again. Nothing makes an agreeable harmony with love but love. Christ loved us first, and contrived how he might shew it, what he might do to make us believe it. For this he pitched upon the most astonishing methods.. He would be humbled, abased, obedient to death ; he would suffer and die in our stead to shew he loved us. In all this he had a design both to save us, and to gain our love. And what is heaven itself but eternal mutual love ?

In the mean time, let us come with love inflamed to him, kindled by love to us. Let it shame us of our weak and feeble love, when the love of Christ is so strong and ardent. Surely our Lord Jesus Christ intended by this ordinance to encrease his childrens love. And let our desire and aim be, to get such a sight of his love, that we may love him who first loved us. Good Lord !

Lord ! that it should be once a question with thy children, whether we do in truth love thee ! Strong love feels its own fires, and soon determines the question : “ Lord, thou that knowest all things ; knowest that I love thee,” John xxi. 17. Cant. viii. 6, 7.

M E D I T A T I O N VIII.

WE come to view our sins laid upon the Lord Jesus ; to see the infinite contrariety of sin to God ; to view the evil of it ; to see the desert of it, in a dying Jesus : for in him, as crucified for our sins, all these are in a lively manner set forth. Shall we ever more have a reconciled thought of sin, and indulge any lust, which was the crucifier of the Lord of glory ? We see indeed the abundings of grace above the abundings of sin : and shall we therefore sin ? God forbid. We come to lay the hand of faith upon the head of our sacrifice, and to confess all our iniquities in all our sins ; to own ourselves as unworthy creatures as any alive ; to take shame to ourselves, which is our due ; to express our indignation against sin, and to mourn over it. Mourn then, O my soul, over sin, which was the cause of thy Saviour’s sorrows, whose sorrows are the cause of all thy joy ! Love much, because much is forgiven thee, and wash thy Saviour’s feet with tears. Let sin have never more entertainment with thee. Abide under the meltings, breakings and dissolvings of love. Behold that precious blood which made atonement, and obtained the remission of thy sins.

Sin is our greatest enemy. Let us aim in this ordinance at the destruction of it. And let us

now

now take our fill of mourning, and godly sorrow, because that is to cease when death comes : there's none of that in heaven. We will therefore mourn now over our pardoned sins, and the sufferings of our Saviour.

When the dying agonies of a dear Saviour were fresh in remembrance, and some of those were converted, that had a hand in his sorrows and sufferings : O what tears, what mourning and sorrow, what bitterness and lamentation, was there ! O that I should wound him (saith one) who was wounded for me ! And that I (might another say) should lay on him those stripes which were to satisfy for my sins who smote him, and with which my soul is healed. I remember the indignities offered, the rude smiting on the face, plucking off the hair, crowning with thorns, and nailing to the cross. I remember the patience of that holy lamb of God under all. " My soul has theni still in remembrance, and is humbled within me." My heart melts and breaks in pieces ; but what tears can express the sorrow that I feel : and what sorrow is adequate to this great occasion ! But my sorrow by degrees kindles into joy, whilst I see, that love was the spring that moved thee in all ; and feel love burning in my breast to him I hated before. I joy to think thy sorrows are past, thou diest no more ; but in thy Father's presence is fulness of joy, and at his right-hand are pleasures for evermore. So when the Jews shall be converted, and have perhaps a sight of Christ from heaven, as Paul had, what mourning will there be ! " When they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, &c. and shall be

be on the mountains, as doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity," Zech. xii. 10, 11. Ezek. vii. 16. chap. xxxvi. 31. O that we might experience this melting, this mourning, that ariseth from faith and love. How sweet are the tears that flow from believing!

MEDITATION IX.

WE come to a banquet of wine: let us come with our petitions. Our God doth, as it were, say unto us, What is thy petition, poor soul, and what is thy request, at the banquet of wine? Is there nothing now thou wouldst ask? Let us think upon Hannah: she had a petition she would make; and she brings it before God, when she comes to his house at Shiloh, and uttered it there; so that "her lips only moved, but her voice was not heard." Howbeit, the Lord heard, and answered; and she fulfilled her vows, 1 Sam. i. 10—13. v. 26—28. What lust wouldst thou have subdued? What grace wouldst thou have strengthened? What wantest thou for thy soul? Bring it before the Lord in faith, and it shall be done for thee; not only to the half of a kingdom, but a kingdom is allotted thee: here our God shews us, not only what he hath done, but what he means to do, for us. Then "open your mouths wide, and he will fill them." Lord, that I might see thy glory! O that I might be like to thee! Shew me thy love; and let me love thee with all my heart and soul! Give me some token for good of thy favour! Put thy Spirit upon me, that I may do great things for thy glory! Are there not such breathings

breathings in thy heart as these? Then wait, and watch what God will answer thee.

MEDITATION X.

UNDER the law they had their sacrifices of peace-offerings; and this was either for the obtaining of some special mercy they wanted and desired, and so suited the last meditation; or it was a thank-offering, to testify their thankfulness for mercy received, Lev. vii. 11, 12. Junius and Tremellius render it *sacrificium eucharisticum*, a sacrifice of praise or thanksgiving. Hence the Apostle to the Hebrews, chap. xiii. 15. "By him let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually;" not that bloody Levitical sacrifice, but "the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." The ancients were wont to call the ordinance of the Lord's Supper the Eucharist; that is, the thanksgiving. They looked upon it as an ordinance to be performed with praise and thankfulness, for the marvellous grace of redemption. O let us indulge a joyful thankful frame! "When Jesus had given thanks, he took bread, &c." Again, "He took the cup, and gave thanks." Hence it obtained the name of the Eucharist, or thanksgiving. Moreover, in the eucharistic sacrifice, or peace-offering, there was great freedom and friendship. The fat was offered on the altar; but the priest fed on the flesh thereof; and not only so, but the offerers. Feasting together is a sign of friendship, Gen. xxxi. 46. Men use to invite friends to their table, as an expression of their love. God the Father, and Jesus Christ, invite us as friends, to be guests

at

at his table : it is the Lord's table, and we sit down in amity and love with him. Eat, O friends, faith he, Drink, O beloved ! This ordinance, then, holdeth forth our peace with God. The breach is made up, and we are at peace again. "Let us eat and be merry." Let this peace-offering, then, be a thank-offering. While here we see not only our peace is made ; but the way, in which it was made, set before us ; how this friendship was procured ; even by a peace-offering, a sacrifice for atonement, the precious blood of Christ.

Finally, A mixture of affections interwoven, and the exercise of various graces, is wonderfully agreeable in this solemnity. It is like the mixed odours of many fragrant flowers, that give a pleasing smell in the spring-time of the year. An utter aversation from sin, and as ardent a desire after the Lord Jesus ; an abhorrence of all evil ; and fervent love to the Lord Jesus ; a view of sin in its colours, the greatness and sinfulness of it ; and a view of the riches and treasures of pardoning grace, the abundings of the one, and of the other ; spiritual joy and triumph, and gospel-sorrow and grief ; Christ-advancing, and self-abasing thoughts ; faith in Jesus Christ, and repentance towards God, twisting and uniting with each other : 'tis then "the spices flow forth," and our "beloved comes into his garden."

M E D I T A T I O N XI.

THIS ordinance is not a sacrifice, as the papists hold ; but it is a commemoration, a representation, and memorial, of the true and great

great sacrifice. It signifies that that sacrifice is offer'd whereof believers do partake ; for “ they who eat of the sacrifice, do partake of the altar,” 1 Cor. x. 18. It is a feast upon, and after, sacrifice ; signifying that God is at peace with us, and that Christ is the food of our souls. Now here we make a covenant with God by sacrifice, or over the sacrifice : and it is, Psal. l. 5. “ Gather my saints together unto me ; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” Thus Abram must divide the sacrifice ; to signify God's part, and Abram's part, Gen. xv. 9, 10. when the Lord would make a covenant with him, v. 18. Not that the whole nature of this ordinance consists in covenanting ; nor that this is the main and principal work, to make vows or resolves. The spiritual christian knows, that the discharge of this duty chiefly lies in discerning the Lord's body, and rememb'ring of Jesus Christ, *viz.* his sufferings and love ; and that therein there is a right and acceptable performance, though there is no such thing as a vow or resolve at all. Yet the blood represented here is the blood of the covenant ; and the Lord's Supper is a seal, and therefore a confirmation of the covenant between God and the believer. And so often as we do this, he saith, It is my people ; and we say, the Lord is our God : therefore we will not live to ourselves, nor to the will of the flesh, but to God. Hence there is a very solemn engagement laid upon us from the very nature of the ordinance ; and what we do virtually say therein, it is not amiss to speak expressly in the inward liftings up of our hearts to God. And sometimes

we

we may open our mouths to the Lord in particular cases ; something like that of Jacob, “ If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, and if the Lord shall be my God ; then this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house ; and of all that thou shalt give me, I surely give the tenth unto thee.” So I would render it ; and, I am sure, as agreeable to the Hebrew. And truly, without a vow, I believe the tenth of our substance is due to religious and charitable uses ; which needs not hinder the assignment of a larger portion. Again, we may say, Lord if thou wilt be my God, and will do me good indeed, and wilt give ability of body, and of mind, I will serve thee with my time, with my gifts, with my health and strength ; all shall be thine : but be not rash in vowing, neither defer to pay that which thou hast vowed to the most high, Eccles. v. 2, 4. Psal. l. 14.

We come this evening, 1. To renew the remembrance of Christ’s love, and of his sufferings ; which are commensurate, both being infinite ; and therein to renew the actings of faith, love, repentance, &c. 2. To renew the covenant of espousals, the marriage covenant with Christ, afresh, by giving up ourselves to him, and receiving him to be ours : as on the day when Christ was willing, and we were willing ; when he took hold of us, and enabled us to take hold of him, in a covenant never to be forgotten, 3. To renew our engagements against sin ; to cast

cast off other lovers: which follows of course upon our engaging to be the Lord's.

MEDITATION XII.

SURE, "this is the house of God;" sure, "this is the gate of heaven!" so spake inspired Jacob, when he wak'd in a sweet surprize at Beth-el. O my soul, are not these the borders of heaven? Are we not come to the land of Beulah, from whence we behold some shinings of the celestial city? As Bunyan, in his Pilgrim's Progress, almost divinely describes it. O! one would think our souls should be transported, and almost ready to leave these clods of earth, these poor bodies, and cleave to those higher things which we here converse with.
‘ But, alas! ’tis otherwise: I would do good but
‘ evil is present with me: I try to fly, but my wings
‘ stick fast in bird-lime: I mount up a little, but
‘ some fatal clog plucks me back to this earth again.
‘ Alas! how low, how vain, how trifling, are
‘ my frames! How little have I found, how little
‘ have I enjoyed! I came with large expectations,
‘ but met with little or nothing: and how poorly
‘ have I done all that I have done! Will not my
‘ my Lord be angry?’—So mourns the poor believer many times; and such complaints have I more than heard. But be not quite discouraged: thy Lord, when “he tells the wanderings, puts thy tears into his bottle,” Psal. lvi. 8. Thou mournest his absence, because thou lovest his presence; nor canst thou give over seeking, till thou findest him whom thy soul loveth. The enjoyments of the disciples themselves, perhaps, were not extraordinary, when Christ himself sat

with

with them at his table. And as on another occasion, so he could then apologize for them ; and so for us, when we can but just say, or scarce say, for ourselves, “ The Spirit truly is willing ; but the flesh is weak.” We ought not, indeed, to indulge ourselves in low and trifling frames ; but, in obedience to Christ’s command, we are to do this in remembrance of him. He would have his children keep up the remembrance of his death, till he come again. If they cannot as they would ; yet they ought as they shall be enabled. Then “ why art thou cast down, O my soul ! and why art thou disquieted within me ? ” Dost thou not find a remedy in this ordinance, even for what thou complainest of ; even blood to heal thee, and to wash away thy sins ; and the remission, as of other, so of the sins of thy holy things ? Thine Aaron bears the iniquities of thy holy things himself ; and, on his mitre, wears, “ Holiness to Jehovah,” that thou mightest be accepted. Then “ hope in God ; for I shall yet praise him.” O blessed be God for Jesus Christ !

MEDITATION XIII.

IT is written, “ And these are antient things : ” speaking of “ the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges : there they dwelt with the king for his work,” I Chron. iv. 22, 23. My brethren, we dwell in the house of God ; and are fed at a high and noble rate. We “ dwell with the king for his work ; ” and ’tis no small honour. But how truly may we say, “ these are antient things ! ” The antient things of God, the Father’s love, and the Son’s love, “ whose goings

goings forth were from of old, from everlasting." The antient things of eternal purposes, and designs of grace, and a covenant of grace before worlds : those "chief things of the antient mountains, those precious things of the everlasting hills." The antient things revealed by God well nigh six thousand years ago, on the day of man's first obedience. The ancient things of Christ's coming into the world, obedience, and death, seventeen hundred years ago. These are called over, and set forth in this ordinance. Some are greatly delighted with antiquity. And I dare say, it is a pleasant exercise of faith to thee, O believer, when thou canst view these antient things : yet these antient things never wax old, or decay ; but will be always fresh and new, even when this ordinance shall wax old, and vanish away. To the end of time, and endless ages of eternity, will these eternal things endure.

Do we not see the things of eternal love looking and flowing down this day upon us ? Welcome is the time that had such an aspect upon a past eternity, in the openings of that eternal love, and representations of glorious performances, contrived, designed, and agreed upon, before all time ? Do we not see that antient love looking down upon this evening, as a time appointed for the efficacy and manifestations of it ? O the riches of electing love ! Lift up the eye of faith, and see your " names written in the lamb's book of life," and rejoice exceedingly. Do we not see the openings, and as it were the dawning, of an endless day of glory upon us, now when the eye-lids of the evening are about to be closed ?

So

So shall it be when the day of time is ended. Welcome is the time that hath such a prospect upon a coming eternity ; that gives the pledges, and comfortable foretastes, of eternal joys. We are hardly reconciled to electing, and particular redeeming grace, without some comfortable hope of interest in them. And is not this made out by our calling into the fellowship of the gospel, if we have fellowship with Christ ? O let us from hence look back to that day of our espousals, that accepted time and day of salvation, when redemption took hold of us ! O that we should be of the few taken out of the vast number ! Out of the myriads and millions of Adam's posterity ! That we should be washed with that blood, when God might take where he pleased ! O Grace ! Grace ! Are we invited to "the marriage supper of the lamb ?" For, "blessed are they that are called thercunto," Rev. xix. 9. Let us look upon this supper as the earnest thereof.

M E D I T A T I O N XIV.

WAS it love in Christ that he washed his disciples feet ! O what love to wash us from our sins ! To wash our filthy polluted souls ! The former was with the cheap element of water ; the latter was with blood, yea, at the dear expence of his own precious blood ; not with the blood of bulls or goats, nor with the blood of others, but with his own : "He came by blood and water." And, having washed us, he puts that question, "Know ye what I have done to you," or, for you ? Sit down, and consider, pause upon it. He puts that question now unto us,

John

John xiii. 12. O what indeed ! Who knows,
who can say, what he hath done for us ?

To commend the love of Christ, do but look upon him in his shining robes, with beams of glory, Matth. xvii. when “ his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.” And then look upon him in the garden, and on the cross. Compare these together. Is this the same glorious Jesus ? In the one, you see sublime glory and majesty ; in the other, deep abasement and humiliation. O might we, by faith, see him in the depth of his humiliation, and height of his exaltation, as white and ruddy, what a glorious sight were this ! The vision of him is the happiness of the innumerable company of angels, and spirits of just men made perfect. And to see and enjoy him, is the comfort and sweet of all communion in the church here below. He is said to be “ glorious, when he is red in his apparel ; and his garments as one that treadeth in the wine-vat,” Isa. lxiii. 1, 2. This is the most glorious discovery of himself, or view, that we can have of him in this present state, Phil. ii. 6—8. Let us follow him from mount Tabor (if it were Tabor where he was transfigured) to Gethsemane, and mount Calvary. He took the same disciples, Peter, James, and John, to be the witnesses both of his glory on the mount, and of his agonies in the garden, Matth. xvii. 1. chap. xxvi. 37. To teach us, that these must come into a close compare, who he was, and what he suffered : we see the love of the whole Trinity in what is held forth in this solemnity. Let us taste and admire the love of Three in One.

MEDITATION XV.

LOOK we back from hence, and take a view of what was wrought in the garden of Eden by our first parents: how we were turned out from the tree of life into a wide world, and lost our original happiness; and what a damning state we were left in by the first Adam, and lay in, as in him. And here let us take a view of what was wrought in the garden of Gethsemane: “As it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord, what he did in the Red-Sea, and in the brooks of Aaron, &c.” Numb. xxi. 14. O but let it be for ever recorded what he did near mount Olivet, at the stream of the brook of Kidron: how a second Adam regained Paradise, ran upon the point of the flaming sword, and recovered the tree of life. Henceforth shall those cherubims unarmed stand, and look down with wonder into the mercy-seat: the first Adam sinned, the second Adam suffered in a garden.

Hence let us view mount Sinai, and see it pacified from mount Calvary: how streams of precious blood asswage the flame of that fiery mount, and silence the thunders of Ebal; pronouncing blessed, blessed, louder than ever cursed, cursed, was uttered from thence. Come and see the print of the nails in the hands, and the feet, of our Jesus: and then take a view of mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the blessed state we are set in, the blessed inheritance we are heirs to, thro’ the blood of Jesus.

Beth-lehem, where our Lord was born, signifies the house of bread. How rightly was it so

so called, where he who was the bread of life first appeared ! “ And thou Beth-lehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah, &c.” In this ordinance we are led to consider the incarnation of Jesus Christ : “ God manifest in the flesh,” in the language of the Apostle, comprehends all he did, and all he suffered in the flesh ; even God obeying, God dying in the flesh. For it follows, justified in the Spirit, which intends his resurrection. O may the house of God be the house of bread to us at this time, and may we be led to an incarnate Jesus !

Nazareth, where he was brought up, signifies that he was to be, and was, a Nazarite unto God, Matth. ii. 23. Now a Nazarite was “ separate unto the Lord, Numb. vi. 2. “ Holy unto the Lord,” ver. 8. How lofty are the words of dying Jacob concerning his beloved Joseph, Gen. xlix. 26. “ Blessings—shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brethren.” Herein he was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was wholly separate to God, to do the will of him that sent him, and was holy unto the Lord all his days. He lived the greatest part of his life (as is probable) at Nazareth. The whole course of his life was a state of separation ; and his life, as well as his death, designed and set apart for our justification.

Calvary, where he was crucified, signifies the place of skulls. He that was the bread of life to others, must come into the state of death himself. And he who was separated to obedience all his life, must be numbered among the dead.

Now let us follow him from Beth-lehem to Nazareth, and from Nazareth to Golgotha, and see the wonders of his birth, and life, and death, wonders of power and grace in all that he hath done and suffered for us.

MEDITATION XVI.

THIS ordinance is to set forth the sufferings of Jesus Christ, “to shew forth his death.” The withdrawings of God from him were properly penal; and how great sorrow and grief must they needs occasion! No man can judge hereof, but he that knows the sweetness of communion with God; he that, with Paul, has been taken up into the third heavens, and heard unutterable words, or hath been with him in the mount, as Peter, James, and John were. Should God withdraw his light and love from a glorified saint; what bitterness, what darkness and sorrow, must it bring upon him! How much more on him who lay in the Father’s bosom, and was always his delight, who knew the joys of heaven, whose life was wrapped up in his Father’s love, and who enjoyed unspeakable delight, in communion with God, while on earth? He never forfeited his Father’s love: it was therefore the punishment he underwent for our sakes. But it was more still to feel his Father’s wrath, and bear the sorrows of hell in his soul. This made him cry out, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” This made him sweat great “drops of blood falling to the ground,” and made him cry out, “My God, my God, &c.” See Psal.

Psal. xxii. 1, 2, 14, 15. The sufferings of his body were great, but not comparable to the inexpressible sorrows of his soul. And shall not my soul be afflicted and mourn, when I contemplate these things?

It is said, that they were wont to talk at their sacrifices of old of the future sufferings of the Messias. They had some glimmerings of his day, and of his death, I am apt to think, as many as savinely believed. The saints above had heard the report of it among them, and two of them came down (perhaps it was) on the top of the mount Tabor, and talked of it there.) For "they appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, that he should accomplish at Jerusalem," Luke ix. 31. And shall not we talk of his sufferings at his Supper?

"By his stripes we are healed". For "he hath torn" [the flesh of his Son], "and he will heal us" [sinners]: "He hath smitten" [him], "and he will bind us up." This I think is the meaning of Hos. vi. 1. O therefore, "come, and let us return unto the Lord." He hath not cast us off, though we have sinned. "After two days will he revive us, and the third day will he raise us up, and we shall live in his sight," v. 2, viz. Mystically, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in whom we were raised as a common person: and spiritually: for after desertion, and his hiding himself, there will come a reviving time.

When Christ said [broken for you] and [shed for you] these words [for you] signify, that we were the offenders, and were to have died, and

deserved to have been broken for sin, by the wrath of God, and to have had our blood spilt by angry justice ; but Christ was broken in our stead, and his blood spilt for ours. And let us think what manner of love that was ! The Jews could see no glory in his humiliation. There was a “ hiding of faces from him, or from us,” as it is in the margin according to the Hebrew, Isa. liii. 3. Christ hid his face from them. He concealed his glory, by the veil of his flesh, and by his humbled state ; and they hid their faces from him, by a strange and surly carriage. O this hiding of faces ! How awful is the one ! and how sinful is the other ! God Lord ! hide not thy face, thy glory from my soul ; lest I do as the Jews did, hide my face from thee by damning unbelief.

M E D I T A T I O N XVII.

THE sufferings of Jesus Christ call for our attention and admiration. The first Adam sinned, the second Adam suffered. We sinned and deserved hell : Christ suffered and purchased heaven. Now when the sufferings of Christ are the subject of our meditation, here are two great things to be considered ; sin the cause on our part, and love the cause on Christ’s part, of all his sufferings. And could we have a spiritual view of both these, how sweetly would it affect us ! They would conspire together to melt the heart. A mere presenting our bodies, and the bare outward performance, “ this is not to eat the Lord’s Supper,” 1 Cor. xi. 20. Nay, tho’ there

there be an applying of the natural faculties, so that there be an historical remembrance of Christ in his sufferings, which lies within the power of nature ; “ this is not spiritually to eat the Lord’s Supper :” but to get a sight of sin, the cause of Christ’s sufferings, and a sight of the love of Christ therein ; “ this is to eat the Lord’s Supper.” And this is given from above.

Let us see all our sins before conversion, sins since conversion, and since we were last at this table, gathered together, and laid upon our sacrifice. Let us see by faith the whole account cleared, the debt-book crossed, the bond cancelled, and all discharged to this day. Let us seek the death of sin when we converse with the death of Christ. It was his enemy, and is our enemy : therefore it shall die, and not live ; these crucifiers of our Lord shall be crucified also.

What are we come for to this table ? Is it because we would see the King in his beauty ? Here is the most affecting sight of him. Would we fain see, admire, and believe his love to our own souls ? Here it is represented, and set forth, in a lively manner. Would we see the price of redemption ? Here it is set before us. And yet it is all nothing, and (in a manner) but common bread and drink, if Christ reveal not himself in the ordinance by the signs : “ We seek him, but we find him not.”

God complained of his people of old, saying, “ Of the rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee,” Deut. xxxii. 18. compare Isa. xvii. 10. In this ordinance the Lord Jesus, knowing how apt we

are to forget his great love, would stir up the minds of his people, and put them in remembrance. The 70th psalm is entitled a psalm to bring to remembrance. And this is an ordinance to that end : “ This do in remembrance of me.” Remember me your Lord, your husband, your Saviour : remember my humbled state, my agonies, my bloody death and passion, and my love in all ; not with an historical remembrance only, but with a spiritual affectionate remembrance. It has not been unusual for nations to keep days of remembrance for national deliverances. Lo ! here a memorial of the greatest deliverance that God himself hath ever wrought !

MEDITATION XVIII.

HERE we may see what sin hath done, and whas grace hath done. what sin hath done with respect to ourselves, and with respect to Christ. Let us look upon ourselves, and consider what we are by nature : how sin hath debased us, what havock it hath made with our souls, what disorder and enmity, what defilement and impotency, what darkness and death, what lostness and misery it hath brought upon us ! How hardly are we reclaimed from the worst of sinful evil ! O how justly we had deserved, and how near we were to going down to the pit of hell ! But Jesus our Lord hath loved our souls from that horrible pit. As Hezekiah spake, “ Thou hast loved my soul (Mishshahhath) from the pit of corruption.” Let us admiring say, blessed Jesus ! Thou hast loved our souls from the pit of hell,

hell. We may see what sin hath done to our dear Lord Jesus. What abasement, what trouble, what reproach, what pain, and how many deaths, it procured to him, to make an end of sin. For “ he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich (Bemothaiv, *in mortibus ejus*, Arias Mont.) in his deaths. It was sin that crowned him with thorns, that pierced, crucified, and slew him. O abominable evil !

On the other hand, we may see here what grace hath done. How it hath taken advantage of sin and misery to shine the brighter, and magnify itself the more ; grace found the ransom, grace provided it, grace accepted it. All the wonderful things in our redemption were wrought by grace. “ Where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded.” The Grace of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit. Let the loud cry of grace, grace, fill all the churches here below as it will be sure to fill the heavenly courts above for ever and ever.

It is a very high privilege and honour that we are partakers of. Do we consider what it is to be separated from the world by election, by redemption, by calling, in communion, in desires, in privileges, in comforts, in hopes ? What manner of favour and dignity ! We are planted in God’s house, we are fed at his table, and have more in reversion than in possession. (2 Sam. ix. 10.) “ This honour have all the saints.”

Now let us improve this ordinance according to the several cases of our souls. Do we walk in the dark about the love of Christ ? Here let us persuade our souls of his love, while he is giving

us the pledges of it. Are our hearts hard and lifeless? Let us look and look again, on this broken Jesus: surely, dying love can soften them. Have we the assurance and joy of faith? Let us come and give vent to our holy joy, by holding a feast to the Lord.

MEDITATION XIX.

LE T us look upon ourselves as children at our Father's table. And herein is his love, that the provision that he makes is the flesh and blood of his own Son. How infinitely dear and delightful Christ was to the Father, passeth all expression. Herein then is love, that he gave up him for us, and gives us him to feed upon. O how rich and glorious is the Father's love!

And Christ is that wisdom of God who "hath furnished her table, mingled her wine," and inviteth, saying, "Come eat of the bread that I have prepared, and drink of the cup that I have mingled." Herein is his love, that he gives us his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink; and, at the expence of his blood, hath procured, that we should come to our Father's table. Thro' him the prodigal is again admitted. We come in the right of our elder brother.

But are we hungry, are we thirsty, now we come to this feast? O what appetites do we bring? Else we shall slight the heavenly dainties, and count it light bread. What is food to one that hath no appetite? Do we come with longings, and strong desires after Christ? "The great Shepherd" takes care of his sheep, and puts them into

into fresh pastures. Let us eat, and be satisfied, let us drink and be drunken, with divine loves, (Cant. v. 1.) Take heed of a self-fulness : such see no need of Christ. He loves that souls come needy and hungry : “ He fills the hungry with good things, but the rich he sends empty away,” Luke i. 53. And as it is a mercy to have corporeal food, and a mercy to have an appetite thereto, and to be enabled to receive and digest it ; so it is in spiritual things.

Every sabbath is a prize put into our hand ; every ordinance is a high favour wherein we enjoy our God : these are our ordinary meals. Blessed be God for them ! But every such time as this is a feast, wherein our God doth provide and furnish his table, at a more than ordinary rate. It is true, you have the same provision you had last time. We have no warrant to alter it ; that would not mend, but mar it. A crucified Jesus is a standing dish, if I may with reverence speak so. Feed, O my soul, upon those dainties, which shall always be new to thee. We have the same food again and again prepared for our bodies ; and yet we count it no weariness ; but as often as there is an appetite, it is as sweet as ever ; we need it as much, and feed as heartily : so if you do but come hungry, and feed on Christ, you will not say, it is light bread ; you will find new delights, new refreshments, in a dying Jesus.

Were we invited this day to the palace and table of some nobleman, or to a feast by an earthly prince ; what manner of thoughts should we have of it ! what an honour should we esteem

it, and admire the condescension of the inviter ! Should we not look for great entertainment ? Should we not have many thoughts, how to behave and carry ourselves, in the presence of an earthly king ? But we are invited into the houses, and to the table of the great King, who is “ King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. O what an honour is this ! What entertainment may we expect ! And how ought we to behave and demean ourselves !

We are strangers and pilgrims passing through this world to a city of habitation. The house of God is our victualling-house by the way, which he hath erected on purpose, for the refreshment of pilgrims. His ordinances are for that end. O let us look upon ourselves as pilgrims, as sojourners (so all our fathers were;) and this as our house of refreshment. But what entertainment have we ? The manna was called angel’s food (Psal. lxxviii. 25.) because if it might be thought that angels did need corporeal food, this might be thought fit for them, and suited to their natures, even this bread from heaven, John vi. 31. But “ Moses gave them not that bread from heaven ; but Christ’s Father giveth us the true bread from heaven ; for the bread of God is he, who comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world, ver. 32, 33.. Do we not all eat of this spiritual bread, and drink of this rock, &c.” Is this to be entertained like pilgrims ? Would not a servant’s place have done ? But must we have the place of sons ? Would not a beggar’s pittance have sufficed ? But must we be so nobly treated, even as kings and priests ? And not only be brought

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to heaven at last, but have some foretastes, and walk upon the borders of heaven, long before we arrive there?

MEDITATION XX.

THE Lord's Supper is an ordinance of representation on Christ's part, being of his institution; and therefore of commemoration on ours. Of exhibition on God's part; and therefore for reception on ours, of Christ and his benefits. Of obsignation on God's part, sealing his children; and should therefore be a confirmation to our faith. It is a seal of God's covenant; and a renewal of ours.

We commemorate this evening our Lord's celebration of the passover, and his institution of his supper, with his disciples. We commemo-
rate that night in which he was betrayed, and all
the terrors of that never to be forgotten night.
“It is a night to be much observed to the Lord
for bringing us out, not from Egypt, but from
spiritual bondage: this is that night of the Lord
to be observed of all the spiritual Israel, in
their generations.” That I may allude to Exod.
xii. 42. it is a night to be remembred, not in an
annual way, that is always too low for the gos-
pel, but every day, and especially every Lord's
day. It was this night he went to that place,
where his enemies must find him; yea, where
divine justice must find him, and did find and
apprehend him. We commemorate his conflict
and conquest the following day, which was also
turned into night, while he hung upon the tree,

by

by that preternatural eclipse of the sun, and greater eclipse of a greater and more glorious sun.

That the innocence of Christ might appear, God so ordered it, that his judge, before whom he was accused, acquitted him, and still insisted upon it, that he was a righteous person, Mat. xxvii. 24. And at last, the accusation written, and set over his head, was no other than that famous one, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. What accusation was this? Nay how great and high a title! Let us therefore view him in the garden, and apply this title, THIS IS JESUS, &c. Yea, let us come to Golgotha, see him on the cross, with this title and superscription, "This is Jesus the king of the Jews;" that is to say, the Saviour, the promised Messiah. Yea, let that be the inscription, THIS IS THE SON OF GOD, according to that famous confession of his before Pilate, I AM THE SON OF GOD, Mat. xxvii. 43. Are we not come forth, at this time to see him, to see Jesus our king and Saviour? Are we come to see that fight? Luke xxiii. 48. O astonishing fight! But let us not so look upon his abasement, as to overlook his exaltation. He is arisen, he is a reigning Jesus: he was a dying, but is a living Redeemer. "Go tell my brethren (saith he, after he was risen,) that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." Whither would not a believer go for a sight of Jesus? No doubt they will speed away to Galilee. It is worth while to go to this and the other ordinance, to travel many miles to a sermon, to see Jesus. Many have gone, and not been dis-

ap-

appointed. “ We see Jesus—crowned with glory and honour.”

He sitteth at God’s right hand, and hath promised his children shall sit down with him, Mat. xix. 28. Rev. iii. 21. In token hereof, he alloweth us to sit down at his table. Some oppose the sitting posture; others reckon it an indifferent thing. To me it doth not seem so: we have the practice of Christ and his Apostles to justify it, who used a table-posture; and it is of a sweet and comfortable signification; it teacheth us the freedom our God admits us to, in a holy boldness and access unto him. And by faith we are to see ourselves already “ sit down with Christ in heavenly places,” Eph. ii. 6. and that we shall one day sit down with him in his kingdom.

This ordinance is appointed for the increase of our faith, and strengthening of our souls: wherein God is condescending to our great weakness (seeing we are such poor sensible creatures) to speak to our very senses; that we might see, with our eyes, Jesus Christ himself evidently set forth as crucified; and hear, with our ears, his gracious voice, bidding us, eat, and welcome; that we might taste his love when we taste the bread; that when we perceive the favour of the wine, we might smell the favour of his good ointments. O what a divine and precious fragrancy! that we might feel and handle the word of life, (I John i. 1.) when we take the bread and the cup. Thus doth Christ speak to our senses in this holy ordinance.

Nor let us forget the advice of God himself to Samuel, when he sent him to anoint David,

I Sam.

1 Sam. xvi. 7. "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature :—for the Lord seeth not as a man seeth, &c." Don't look on the meanness of the elements, which may seem contemptible to the eye of sense. What is a mouthful of bread, and a little portion of wine ? The worship of the temple was more magnificent than the worship of the New Testament. Men are for pomp in the place, and pomp in the worship. But see the meanness and simplicity of the gospel ; a little bread and wine. Nor do we read of silver dishes, or golden chalices : I suspect our Saviour used none of them. Men would make up with shew, what they want of faith. Let us try if we can see the greatness of the thing signified, under the meanness of these figures and representations ; if we can satisfy ourselves in converse with an humble Jesus, set forth in an humble manner to our faith.

MEDITATION XXI.

WE come to view the price of redemption, how great it is ! Our God hath put redemption betwixt us and others ; as it is, Exod. viii. 23. margin. Now redemption supposeth captivity and misery redeemed from : O let us consider what we are redeemed from ; who hath redeemed us ; and what price we are redeemed with. Not any thing of a small value, but with a price of greater value than heaven and earth ; with blood of greater worth than the blood of the whole creation, of angels, and of men, if I may so speak. We want nothing but faith in it, and

and a sense of it, to swallow us up with admiration, astonishment, and praise. Ought the people of Israel not to neglect keeping the passover, because it was a commemoration of so great a deliverance as that of Egypt? And shall believers neglect celebrating the memorial of a far greater deliverance? And were they at the celebration thereof to talk of the occasion? Exod. xii. 26, 27. And shall not our thoughts be filled, and our admiration raised, at the thoughts of redemption from spiritual and eternal bondage?

This was the relief of a finning Israelite; he might bring a sacrifice; he might come to the priest to make atonement for him. But this is our relief; we may come, by fresh applications, to this sacrifice of Christ. We have sinned since we were last at this table. Let us not stand the farther off; we have the more need to come to him, who is our altar, priest, and sacrifice. Now herein is the grace of God: sacrifices of old were at the cost of the offender; but this great one sacrifice is provided at the cost of him who was offended, wherein he provideth for his own satisfaction. God might have held us to provide an offering, to bring our sacrifice: but O, then, how sad had been our case! Blessed be God, who hath provided himself a lamb. This is our sin-offering, our trespass-offering, our burnt-offering, our peace-offering, and all. Nor need we any other. "Lo I come (saith he) to do thy will," that is, to be a sacrifice. Let us offer it up to God in the eye of faith. This love of Jesus Christ is like the box of precious ointment, which, when it was broken up, filled all

the

the house with odour. Such is thy love to us, O blessed Jesus ! Such is thy people's love to thee, though not with the like reason.

Sin made a great and wide breach between God and us ; and Christ undertook to make it up. He is here set forth as a peace-maker. It was his great design to reconcile God to man, and man to God. Not that God needed our friendship, but we needed his. He was not first in the breach, but he was first in the reconciliation. Sin made the breach ; let us for ever hate it. Christ made it up ; let us for ever love him.

Love has done all for us. Love gives us our daily bread, and daily cares for us : but love provided the bread and water of life. Love gave the bullocks out of the herd, and sheep out of the fold ; but love gave the immaculate Lamb of God. Do we not admire God in our table-mercies ? How he gives his good creatures for us, the poor lambs, and calves, and oxen, sinless, harmless creatures, which is more than we are ? Truly, we are very unthankful, if we do not. But what shall we say, when the flesh and blood of Christ is set before us, as the food of our souls ? When Christ, the Son of God, gave his life a ransom for many ? O how precious is life ! Every one of us valueth his life at more than all the world. Therefore a man will give all for his life. Of what inestimable value then was the life of Jesus Christ, who was the prince of life, the Lord, the fountain of life ? How ought we to account of it ! It was more than ten thousand worlds, if there had been so many. This was the price of our redemption. He gave his life. Love can rise no higher.

MEDITATION XXII.

IT is the blood of the testament that is represented here, even as it seals and confirms the testament. For a testament is of force after men are dead, not before, Heb. ix. 17. Let us look upon ourselves as legatees of the great testator, our Lord Jesus. O let us view by faith the New Testament sealed with blood, and the testator's love therein. Let us be receiving and taking in his legacies, which he has bequeathed to us. These are his love-tokens, the gifts of a dying Jesus. And he lives to be the executor of his own testament, which no other ever did. So that the legacies of him that died, are the presents of him that lives. Blessed Jesus ! how many endearments are there in thy love !

"I perceive (said he) that virtue has gone out from me." It is so still. Virtue from Christ in heaven can reach the soul here on earth. And "do not thy people perceive it too ?" We feel it in a promise : we feel it in an ordinance ; we find ourselves dead, and anon we are quickened. A look, a touch from thee, puts the wheels in motion. May virtue proceed from thee, and that we may find in our souls that we are healed !

And let us receive the remission of sins. On the day of atonement, when the high-priest entered into the holiest of all, all the sins of the people were atoned for, and forgiven to that day. So here we are to receive the pardon of our sins that are past, to this present day, to this very hour. We are to receive an acquittance from the beginning of the world, the time of old

Adam

Adam's sin, unto this day, and the virtual pardon of all to come ; and therefore also to mourn over all our sins, Adam's and our own, tho' that also is ours, Deut. xxiv. 18. Israel must remember they had been bondmen in the land of Egypt. Now let us remember we once were bondmen : but O ! glorious redemption, rich remission, perfect healing and salvation !

We are to look upon ourselves, and one another, as the members of Jesus Christ, the children of our Father. Then shall we see our own dignity, and love one another. Communion with one another is as well signified, as really enjoyed, by that one bread, 1 Cor. x. 17. This blood is said to be shed, not only [for you], but [for many]. See how Christ deals about his love in the distribution of the bread and wine, and gives to every one a part. It may sometimes be comfortable to remember, how of old, " he that gathered most had nothing over, and he that gathered less had no lack." However, our soul-nourishment depends on living upon Christ, the bread of life. Our baptism, which is a sign of our regeneration and ingrafting into Christ, (which is but once) is therefore but once to be administered : but this ordinance, which is a sign and means of nourishment, is oft to be administered. " Do this, as oft as ye do it, in remembrance of me." The analogy is in the effects : for, as bread feeds our bodies for this temporary life ; so also the body of Christ, received by faith, feeds our souls to eternal life. Again, as bread passes into our nature, that it may be one with us ; so the body of Christ, received

‘ received by faith, is united with us, that we
are one.’ Maccov.

M E D I T A T I O N . XXIII.

WE are a week nearer the end of our journey than the last sabbath ; a month nearer than the last breaking of bread : are we nearer to heaven ? Rom. xiii. 11. Then only are we so, when we are more meet and fit for it. That’s the design of this ordinance. O what do we get from time to time, while we sit under the shadow of Christ’s love ? Are we strengthened for our journey.

How many years hath Christ come seeking fruit in this vineyard, not only three years, but many more ? And how many times, in that compass of time, have we been at our Lord’s table ? Jesus Christ keeps account of the time, Jer. xxv. 3. How are the years passing, since we came last into gospel-order and settlement ? since Christ placed an unworthy creature in his relation and office ? Sad will it be, if he hath sought fruit, and found none. But I hope better things, and that “ now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”

When we have not those enjoyments, and see not that fruitfulness we desire, let us be humbled, but not discouraged ; knowing that we are not to live upon ordinances, but upon Christ himself, believing that he hath done all the good we should have done, and satisfied for what we have done amiss. This will be our support.

MEDITATION XXIV.

HOW doth the poor world live without communion with Christ ! And how do believers content themselves to live a day without sensible communion, seeing he is our life, our food, our all ? Do you not live a whole day, yea days, and perhaps a week together, without sensible heart-communion ? Are you contented so as to bodily food ? And do you know whether you eat or no ? Can you certainly tell, whether you have fed upon Christ or no, since you were last at this table ? O now make a hearty meal ! Ezek. iii. 3. Cause your souls to feed, your faith to feed on Christ. But O what feast will there be above !

Who can appear, who can stand, before an infinite Majesty ? Yet, when death comes, you are called so to do. Who shall teach us the laws of that heavenly court ? Come to this ordinance, and learn. God admits us to a nearness, to embolden our faith against that day.

The more Christians converse with Christ, the more they are like him ; they behold, and are changed into his image. O then, look earnestly on him, till, by looking, thou art prepared to see him face to face.

Many are the difficulties of the wilderness ; be not discouraged at them. It will be the matter of wonderment, and also of joy and praise, when thou art arrived safe above, that ever thou gotst to heaven, that so great sins were forgiven, that thou didst overcome in the conflict ; but it will be owned to have been “ through him that loved thee, and died for thee.”

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